

Smart Towns Series: Technical Assistance Guide

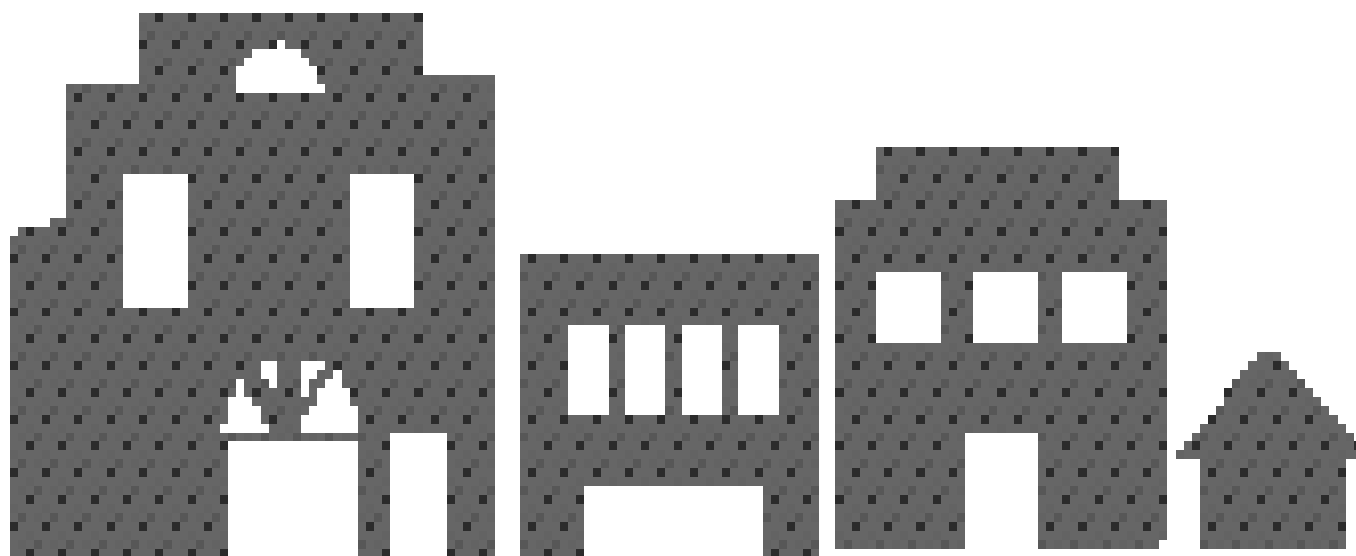
Project Development for Rural Communities



Idaho Department of Commerce
Rural and Community Development Division

**SMART TOWN SERIES:
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GUIDE**

**PROJECT
DEVELOPMENT FOR
RURAL COMMUNITIES**



**IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
RURAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION**

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Smart Towns Technical Assistance Guide Project Development for Rural Communities

**This guide is available through the Idaho Department of Commerce (IDOC)
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INTRODUCTION

"Never doubt that a group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

**-Margaret Meade
Anthropologist**

Many communities are realizing change may be necessary to ensure their survival. Historical dependence on natural resources and agriculture is not likely to generate the necessary income and tax revenues to sustain our communities into the future. In fact, many communities are losing population and are faced with fewer taxpayers to pay for the maintenance of existing infrastructure and many other services.

Building and sustaining economically and socially healthy communities will require innovative thinking and new attitudes.

This Handbook is an overview of basic planning principles used to develop community projects to achieve a desirable quality of life:

Basic steps in this process include:

- Community Organization
- Mission and Vision Statements
- Community Assessments
- Goals and Objectives
- Action Plan Strategies
- Evaluation

While terminology or the order of these steps may vary, there is

The Appendices contain examples of ways to evaluate and organize community information. These are used with permission from a variety of resources.

A section on grant writing tips is included because many of the efforts outlined in this Handbook will lead to seeking outside resources.

Financing is not discussed in this Handbook because a separate Handbook on

Public Finance Strategies has been developed. Hard copies are available

through the Idaho

Department of Commerce (IDOC) at (208) 334-2470 or the Association of Idaho Cities at (208) 344-8594. It is also available on both Web sites at www.idoc.state.id.us or www.idahocities.org respectively.



"All things are ready, if our minds be so."

**William Shakespeare,
English dramatist and poet**

I. Seeing The Possibilities

“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”

-Albert Einstein

Change and Creativity: Prerequisites for Development

As citizens look for ways to renew and revitalize their community, it is a good idea to consider how to address situations that may arise when change is proposed and a mix of ideas and values come together.

Before discussing the benefits of developing mission and vision statements, the following prerequisites for working on development projects are briefly addressed:

- Change Management
- Creativity
- Public Participation and Diversity
- Meeting Facilitation and
- Conflict Management

Change Management

The ability to accept change and be creative is basic in addressing community challenges successfully. Several factors must be in place for successful change to occur:

- Agreement that change is needed and that everyone can benefit in some way by improving a community situation.
- Agreement on what would be an improvement.

- Ability to see the big picture and how change in one area might affect other areas.
- Ability to see problems as related and mutually solvable.
- Ability to work outside of environments that inhibit creative thinking, i.e. political, where someone wins and someone loses.
- Ability to see community assets, and not just needs. This is based on the abundance mentality rather than the need based mentality that is promoted by asset mapping advocates. More is discussed on this topic in the Section on Community Assessments.

Creativity

Creativity is an ability, an attitude and a process. It is the ability to imagine something new, an attitude to accept change and be flexible. It is also a process used to refine ideas and solutions.

Negative Attitudes that Block Creativity

- Seeing projects as impossible feats
- Feeling powerless to effect change
- Worrying about what others think
- Having prejudices

Positive Attitudes that Encourage Creativity

- Curiosity and valuing life long learning
- Willing to challenge assumptions and beliefs
- Believing most things can be solved
- Seeing the good in the bad
- Seeing problems as opportunities

“To improve is to change, to be perfect is to change often.”

Winston Churchill

British Prime Minister

Public Participation and Support

One of the first things you need to do if you want your project to succeed is build public support. Some funding options require that you hold public hearings or possibly an election, so it is important to build support well in advance. Also, many grants require local matching funds, which may result in increased taxes or fees. This information needs to be provided to the public as soon as possible.

Citizens have a responsibility to communicate and have their views heard and to try to find common ground. Access to the political process and information on how to participate is essential to this process.

Public hearings provide the arena to exchange information about community projects. It is meant to empower citizens by giving them an opportunity to participate in decisions

affecting their own lives. Issues such as property use or ownership, increases in service charges, or the environment need to be addressed because they can be very personal and elicit strong emotional responses. Public participation should be managed so it is timely, focused and beneficial to decision-making, not simply a reaction to a crisis.

When individual, group or public meetings are held, it is important to be aware of the accessibility and



transportation needs of persons with disabilities, and any potential language barriers.

Advance notice and good information about meetings should be provided. This can be done in a variety of formats to reach as many people as possible. Citizens need to be able to express their thoughts and opinions during or after the meeting, either verbally or in writing. The community should be ready to respond to each person's concerns.

Public meetings should be conducted in a manner that meets the needs of non-English speaking residents where a significant number of non-English speaking residents are expected to participate. It generally is not that difficult to find someone who is bilingual in the area or region and can

provide oral or written translation services.

Diversity Includes Everyone

Diversity is often misunderstood. It is not about any particular group or culture; it is about including everyone in finding solutions to improve the community. It acknowledges the different values; behaviors and perspectives based upon individual life experiences. Community residents have skills, knowledge and approaches to problems that can enrich the process. Sam Byrd, president of “¡Diversity Works!” has developed a list of steps that can help create inclusive communities.¹ These are:

- Encourage diverse groups to work together to solve problems and make equitable decisions.
- Include multiple perspectives in community planning and activities.
- Focus on people, not programs.
- Be innovative and approachable
- Involve diverse individuals and promote collaborative community participation.
- Recognize, understand, accept and respect cultural differences.

¹ Sam Byrd, Director, ¡Diversity Works! Cross-cultural and Organizational Development Consulting training materials presented at the Northwest Community Development Institute June 2002; 317 Happy Day Blvd., Suite 125, Caldwell, ID 83607 Phone: (208) 453-1320

- Check your community for intentional and/or unintentional bias.
- Do something to correct the bias that you find.
- Practice blending discipline and flexibility.
- Communicate.
- Act strategically, don’t just plan strategically.

Appendix A contains Sam Byrd’s Diversity Accountability Questionnaire so you can rate your group or community’s inclusive practices. A Community Action Plan is also included to assist in developing a strategy for inclusiveness. For more information, contact Sam Byrd at ¡Diversity Works! (208) 453-1320.

Meeting Facilitation

A large part of the planning process is accomplished in meetings. When meetings are well planned participants have a better chance of contributing their best ideas. Sometimes planning a meeting takes as much time as running it. When planning your meeting, it is a good idea to ask the following questions:

- What is the purpose and desired outcome of the meeting? Being specific is important. Is it to exchange information, brainstorm, accomplish certain tasks, build relationships, or is it a combination of these?

- How much time will be required to accomplish what needs to be done? Decide how long the meeting should last, and the time it will take for each item on the agenda. Factor in time for discussion and about fifteen minutes at the end for a summary and/or agreement on what the next step will be.
- What process would be useful? Make the connection between what you want to achieve and how you can run the meeting.
- Who needs to attend the meeting? Participants should consist of at least one person from each community group, stakeholder, or organization affected by the planning. There should be someone with enough authority to make decisions.
- Decide what information should be sent out in advance of the meeting. Send out agendas ahead of time to give participants an opportunity to ask questions and prepare for the meeting. If there is material that will be discussed, be sure to send it in advance.
- Think about the meeting place. Obviously it should be comfortable. Refreshments are very popular at meetings. Do you

need audio or visual aids? What should be done ahead of time? Flip charts are always valuable when brainstorming. They also create a record of the work product, allowing corrections or clarification to take place. Flip charts are also helpful in organizing thinking and keeping people on track.

Conflict Management

Since community projects involve many different ideas and concerns, it is inevitable conflict will occur. Recognizing conflict exists, and a willingness to try to resolve differing opinions and ideas, will help keep your project on task.

Unresolved conflict can create a number of problems and has the potential to stop a project in its tracks. Destructive conflict can:

- Divert energy
- Drain morale
- Polarize group members
- Deepen differences
- Obstruct cooperation
- Kill a project

A more creative and positive approach is to:

- Open up the issues in the conflict to a focus on interests and not positions
- Develop clarity
- Improve problem-solving capacity
- Increase involvement

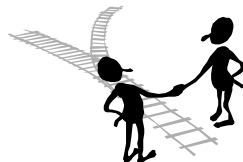
- Keep focus on task at hand
- Create an environment for better communication

Good facilitators assist participants in engaging in constructive conflict. This gets tricky because conflict over values and preferences are often not negotiable. Ground rules for managing conflict should be discussed up front. These include:

- ✓ Recognizing a certain amount of conflict is ok
- ✓ Allowing enough time to try to resolve the conflict
- ✓ Helping participants clarify what the conflict is about
- ✓ Not taking sides
- ✓ Framing the conflict in terms of the problem to be solved
- ✓ Affirming the validity of all viewpoints
- ✓ Helping everyone save face
- ✓ Discussing what happens if no agreement is reached
- ✓ Asking if the group can proceed with what they do agree on and hold back on areas of disagreement

Tips for Minimizing Conflict

There are some ways you can resolve conflict in a constructive and a healthy way.²



- Focus on finding solutions and directions.
- Attempt to define and describe the conflict in cooperative terms (i.e., as a common problem).
- Focus on issues while they are small, rather than permitting them to grow over time and become larger ones.
- Try for full disclosure of all facts rather than allowing, “hidden agendas” (leftover feelings or old arguments not settled) to function.
- Encourage validation of the others interests or concerns (feelings are valid no matter what the facts are).
- Try for a “win-win” solution (there is a piece of the pie for everyone) rather than a “win-lose” (my gain is your loss).

Remember differences of opinion can be seen as a way of collecting more information, clarifying issues, checking on group commitments and testing how good an idea is as you look for better alternatives.

Mission Statements

The strategic planning process usually starts with a vision or mission statement. These can be done together or separately. There are some generally accepted standards for

² Adapted from *Working With Our Publics. Module 3: Developing Leadership, Learners*

Packet, North Carolina State Extension Service.

developing both. These are noted here.

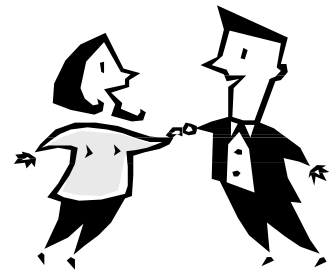
Mission statements are an important start in putting your desire for change in motion. Mission statements sum up what your community or group is trying to accomplish. Mission statements should include:

- A description of who you are, what you do, what you stand for and why you do it. Be direct and powerful.
- Enough time should be allowed for final input and editing. One to two weeks is reasonable.
- Concise wording, no more than 3-4 sentences long.
- Be outcome-oriented, stating a broad goal that is future oriented.
- Be inclusive of the kinds of strategies and community sectors that will be used to reach each goal.
- Be general and flexible enough to adapt to changing times, needs and membership.
- Include a review process to be edited on a regular basis.

Mission statements tend to explain your goals to interested parties, and assure them that your initiative is not "all talk and no action." They also increase the chance potential members will be attracted to your team. Effective vision and mission statements will reassure funding sources that their money is going to good use.

Sample Mission Statements

- **By 2008, the City of Franklin will possess a shared sense of community pride and identity resulting in the development of the community's economic base by protecting and promoting its historic and cultural assets.**
- **To provide and maintain essential services that meet the collective basic needs of the citizens of Donnelly and to identify and seize opportunities for a higher quality of life.**
- **To celebrate strength in diversity by enabling meaningful exchange and community participation among people of all backgrounds and circumstances.**



Remember, even if your statement is a little unpolished, it can give you a focus that will assist you in your planning.

Vision Statements

It is easy to lose sight of specific ideals or changes when dealing with the day-to-day situations that can take up energy and redirect focus. Maury Forman and



Jim Mooney, in their book, “Learning to Lead: A Primer on Economic Development Strategies,”³ state “Every community needs a vision if it wants to go somewhere and be able to know when it has arrived.” Vision is seeing with the mind’s eye what is possible of people, projects and the community. Need and possibility overlap and things are re-invented. It is these agreed upon ideas and possibilities that make up a vision statement.

“You’ve got to think about “big things” while you’re doing small things, so that all the small things go in the right direction.”

Alvin Toffler, Futurist and Writer

Vision statements should be concise, positive and flexible, but broad enough to be supported by a variety of goals. Foreman and Mooney go on to say, “An excellent vision will incorporate the best of the community’s history into an ideal, yet feasible, view of the future. It will include an organizational charter of core values and principles, summarize priorities, plans and goals, provide insight into the future and identify what makes the community unique.” They refer to it as a community’s “declaration of interdependence with regional activities.”

³ Maury Forman and Jim Mooney, *Learning to Lead: A Primer on Economic Development Strategies*, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1999, p. 12

Stephen Covey⁴ states, “Visualizing something organizes the abilities needed to bring it about. We have a wide range of physical, mental and emotional abilities. To mobilize them, we need only to give them a direction, a focus.” That is why Beginning with the End in Mind is one of the first habits of effectiveness.”

A vision can:

- Guide the organization to its preferred future
- Remind the community what it represents
- Be positive and inspire people to take pride in their community
- Control unrelated activities
- Free the community from past failures

It is important to start creating your vision by identifying the issues that matter to people in your community. It should be an open process, which includes citizens, stakeholders and community supporters. Stakeholders are persons, organizations or groups that have a personal or professional interest in community operations, resources or programs.

⁴ Stephen Covey, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Habit 2: Begin With the End in Mind*, Covey Leadership Center, 1990.



Appendix B

has a format for identifying community or project stakeholders.

Visualizing the future can be done through a variety of techniques such as focus groups, surveys and interviews. Some questions you can ask to start the process are:

- What is your dream for our community?
- What do you want to change?
- What do you see as the community's major issues or challenges?
- What do you see as the community's major strengths and opportunities?
- What do you think should be the purpose of this effort?
- Why should these issues be addressed?

Benefits of Vision Statements

- Breaks you out of normal daily boundaries
- Identifies direction and purpose
- Encourages interest and commitment
- Encourages unique and creative solutions
- Builds loyalty and productivity

Vision Killers

- Tradition
- Burned out leaders and stakeholders
- Stereotypes
- Short-term thinking

- Negative thinking

The next section focuses on community assessments. Your community assessment should reflect aspects of your community you have not already looked at and those elements you need to examine to make positive changes for the future.

II. Community As

“It is a capital mistake to theorize be

A community assessment process is meant to identify and define community strengths and weaknesses. It is not designed to resolve issues.

Community assessments are the essential starting point to strengthen citizens' shared vision and provide the opportunity to motivate others. There is general agreement that the more involved and comprehensive the assessment process, the more likely

local citizens will buy into the plan and ensure it is implemented.

It is a good idea to create an environment where it is safe to discuss issues or frustrations not usually discussed in public.

A community assessment should not be viewed as an end in itself, but a process that will lead to action and change.

A community assessment allows a community to gather data on such things as:

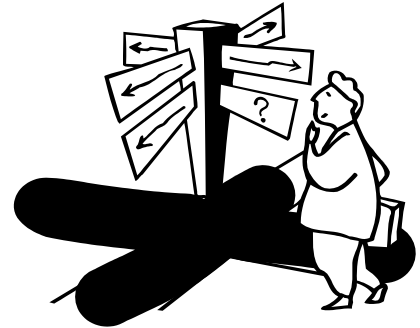
- The general state of the community as well as specific problem areas.
- The actions needed to improve the community at the local level.
- The type of project that will help you to solve the problem or problems.
- The attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, expertise, skills, ideas and concerns of the people in your community.
- The support you can expect for the activity or activities you plan to carry out.
- The resources (people, time, money, supplies, etc.) that are

available to help you carry out your project.

Although what is desired at the community level is often *felt*, documentation is often necessary before a project can be developed. A needs assessment can be very helpful in obtaining community opinion and gaining participation.

Getting Started

Since conducting a community assessment can be labor intensive, it is important to get organized and be prepared. Determine what information needs to be collected and how it can best be obtained. Whose opinions will be needed? How much time will it take? What will it cost?



There are many ways of gathering information about the community that are basic and community driven.

- **Ask Questions** Make a list of the questions or issues in areas in which you want information. When interacting with citizens in the community include your questions in the conversation.

- **Questionnaires and Checklists**

These methods are similar to interviews, but less time consuming. It also is more objective and streamlined than interviews. Participants can fill them out on their own, or it can be done during a group meeting. The checklist should cover many aspects of the community. Participants should be asked to rate each area as either strong, fair, needs improvement, uncertain or not relevant or a similar rating system that provides a distinction between one area and another. (See Community Inventory model in Appendix D).

- **Interviews** are personal, but allow for open-ended responses that are not quantifiable. While interviews are probably the most time consuming and labor intensive, they can stimulate in-depth responses and a lot of information. Interviews can be conducted in person or by telephone. Ten to twelve questions are usually plenty.

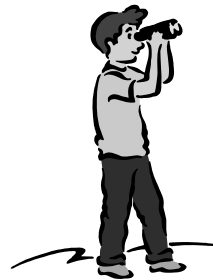
- **Listen**

When circulating through the community, be tuned in to what people are saying about the issues and concerns being pursued in the development effort. Listen to local radio commentaries, read letters to the

editor, ask community officials to provide you with a list of the type and number of complaints and comments they have received on various issues.

- **Observe**

Look for things that need improvement or that look good or ideas that might be applied to other areas. Make a note of



those things that are inconsistent with the goals of the community. Watch people and how they relate. Observe the interaction at meetings.

Are some people being left out, or pushed out? Who are the people meeting at the coffee shop, or at the same lunch table? Are community decisions being made there? Are the sessions open? Make these observations periodically (at least once a year).

- **Record and Organize**

Take notes and periodically look them over. Organize them by topic and by type of needed action. When there is enough information to begin developing actions around a topic there will also be documentation that will be useful in convincing others that the issue is relevant.

- **Conduct Focus Group Interviews**

This method allows people with common interests to express their opinions about specific programs, services, activities, issues, etc. Assemble and query a group of people knowledgeable about a specific issue and who are willing to interact on that topic. Focus groups can build a greater base than the sum of their individual knowledge. Participants should represent citizens you want to sample (12 is a good number). Questions must be prepared in advance. Those that define issues can also be enlisted to develop solutions.

- **Conduct Attitude Surveys**

Attitude surveys are a means of obtaining the level of knowledge local citizens have and their attitudes and values concerning one or more issues. It is a means of developing a sense of participation and ownership as well as gathering useful data.

- **Conduct Select Interviews**

Select interviews are a means of gathering information from people in the community that have a specific knowledge base. This is a quick and inexpensive method, but their responses may not be representative of the views of the community.

- **Conduct Subject Focused Surveys**

This method is helpful in gathering information about a specific topic such as school finance, recreation needs or methods of financing specific improvements.

- **Hold Public Meetings**

These gatherings help develop ideas, agendas, concerns, priorities and tentative action plans. As people go through a process of expressing their desire for what their community should be like in the future they may discover that their goals are very similar. This can create an environment for working cooperatively in achieving goals.

The importance of a community's awareness of inclusiveness cannot be overstated. Efforts should include non-English speaking residents by using an interpreter, if necessary, at meetings or printing notes or information in their language. Meeting places should always be made accessible to persons with disabilities and should be noted in any meeting plans or announcements.

- **Hold Community Workshops**

These are useful for general or special purpose information exchange, developing alternative action plans and studying their implications.

- **Retreats** are typically conducted in a daylong meeting. This is a good method when key stakeholders are participants. Issues can be explored in great detail and each participant can develop a sense of the opinions and perspectives of others in your group or community.

- **Surveys**

Surveys are useful in verifying proposed projects meet the objectives



of the funding organizations.

To be valid, surveys must follow an accepted methodology. Consider the following areas:

- How the survey is distributed by sample area and size.
- How the information is collected:
 - By mail
 - Door to door
 - Combination
- Who collects the information, i.e. trained volunteers or professional surveyors
- How the survey is designed to make sure it does not bias

respondents to answer a certain way

- Good unbiased pre-survey publicity
- How results are measured and reported.

Some funding sources require a Survey Report that usually includes:

- A description of the project and benefits
- A description of the survey process; notices, publicity, etc.
- Names of who conducted the survey and how they were trained
- Copies of all survey documents
- Maps of the survey area

Community Assessment Design

A community assessment tries to identify the gap between where you are and your desired condition. Here are some steps that are helpful when designing your assessment.

- **Decide on the purpose of your assessment.**

Will you identify the problem or project you want to work on? Will you collect information about environmental, cultural, political, social, and economic issues, or all of the above? Remember personal opinions matter, there is no one right

answer and uninformed responses are ok.

- **Identify the type of information you need to know.** Two distinct types of information can be gathered to obtain a broad spectrum of facts and details. **Qualitative data** focuses on quality or kind such as attitudes. For example, it is very beneficial to collect information on stakeholder perceptions. There are two types of stakeholders, internal and external. Information can be collected from both in your assessment. Internal stakeholders are staff, board members, advisory council members and volunteers. External stakeholders are those who are invested in your programs or services, but do not play a central role in day-to-day operations. This includes community citizens, constituents, local lenders and subscribers.

A list for identifying community or project stakeholders is taken from the *Community Development Handbook*⁵ and is reprinted in Appendix B for your use.

Quantitative data focuses on amounts and figures and can be derived from sources such as census

⁵ Community Development Handbook: A Guide for Facilitators, Leaders and Catalysts, Energy Corporation

data, budget figures, statistics and engineering plans.

- **Existing data.** Some of your assessment work may already be done. Think of times when evaluations or surveys may have been conducted as a result of another event. This can be very important data that should not be overlooked. Information should not be more than 2-4 years old, depending on the type of data.
- **Identify where you must go to find the information.**
- **It helps to be creative when looking for information since there are so many sources.**
- **Collect the information orally, visually, electronically, and in printed form.**

Visual images such as photographs or videos can be powerful tools to capture information.

- **Verify and analyze the data.** Analyze what the information tells you, what gaps and discrepancies you find, what is still missing and what trends you discover.

- **Summarize the information.** Your summary is a report about what your assessment has revealed. This report should reveal how you collected your information, what you found, and your interpretation of the

information and what you plan to do with it. The report should be as detailed as possible.

➤ **Communicate the information to various stakeholders and community members.**

This will help to increase the awareness of the issue or need in the community and better enable you to bring stakeholders into the planning process. Communication is an on-going process that should take place throughout the life of your project.

Community Inventory: A Model for Economic Development Readiness

It is imperative that you know before you start a project what impacts it will have on your community. Everything you build, improve, repair, or replace affects something else.

One way to conduct a community inventory. One way to look at these relationships, according to Kenneth C. Wagner and Maury Forman,⁵ is to rate several aspects of your community or area on a scale of 1 to 5. They used 23 factors to evaluate a community's readiness for economic development.

- Appearance
- Attitudes towards growth

⁵ Kenneth C. Wagner and Maury Forman, "How to Create Jobs Now and Beyond 2000: A Step-by-Step Guide to Creating Jobs in the 21st Century", The Wagner Group, p. 43-52.

- Available buildings and commercial/industrial sites
- Child care
- Communications
- Community and/or area data summary
- Education and training systems
- Financial resources
- Environmental issues
- Government
- Health care
- Housing
- Cost of living
- Image
- Labor force and climate
- Major employers
- Solid waste
- Taxation
- Transportation
- Utilities and services
- Work force and training
- Support for existing companies
- New company start-up programs
- Recreational and cultural facilities, which include recreational resources and cultural amenities.

The following rating designations were suggested to rank each readiness factor:

1. **Superior:** as good as an investor would expect to find in competitor cities.
2. **Excellent:** well above average, but needing improvement.

3. **Average:** mediocre, nothing to be proud of. Not appealing to investors.
4. **Below Average:** requiring substantial improvement just to be acceptable.
5. **Poor:** so far below average you can count on investors to be turned away, unless you happen to have special assets that will attract companies, despite your poor rating on other factors.

For detailed questions in each area, go to Appendix D.⁶

Infrastructure Inventory

Declining infrastructures can be a real detriment to health and safety and potential for local economic development. Something that can be done to counteract the problem of declining infrastructures is a good capital improvements planning and budgeting program.

Regionalization of service of administration, discussed in Section IV, is sometimes a workable, more affordable solution to infrastructure problems.

More capital improvement and budgeting information is available through the Department of Commerce

and in the Public Finance Strategies Handbook mentioned earlier.

In Appendix E, you will find a sample Infrastructure Inventory. The Infrastructure Inventory is a tool to evaluate the condition and needs of facilities and services critical to economic and community development. The inventory can help you gather basic information vital to understanding the economic potential of the community and to the living conditions of residents.

The depth of information and its usefulness to the community is up to you. It is not intended to be a fill in the blank, true/false type of questionnaire, but a tool that identifies strengths and weaknesses in your infrastructure. You will be pleased with your final product and surprised at the value and knowledge you will gain from it.

Census Power

Like their brochure says, "You'll hit the mother lode of quality information fast when you log on to the U.S. Census Bureau's updated user friendly Web site!"

Census 2000 is considered to be the largest peacetime effort in the history of the United States.

There have been a lot of firsts associated with Census 2000. It is believed that Census 2000 has

⁶ Wagner, Forman, Creating Jobs Beyond 2000-, p. 153-163.

developed a more complete and accurate tally because of the Census Bureau's partnership with 140,000 local and tribal governments, businesses, and community based organizations that were involved in its promotion program.

One of the most impressive changes is the availability of census data on the Internet at www.census.gov. Information about states, counties, cities and even small geographic segments of a particular community, in the form of prepared tables and maps can be found through American Fact Finder (on the census Web site homepage). Cities, large and small, unincorporated communities, census tracts, block groups and blocks can be found on this site.

One of the nice features of American Fact Finder is that when new data is released, it is highlighted on the page, with links to the new data. New data will continue to be released well into 2003-2004.

Community profiles can be developed by gathering data on racial composition, age, gender distribution, percent of owner vs. renter occupied housing and single heads of household. Geographic sections of a community can also be compared to each other.

Other improvements include links to:

- Information about specific population groups
- State data centers (See IDOC Web site and Idaho County Profiles) and city profiles
- Federal agency status information
- The American Community Survey, which has socio-economic, demographic and housing information in many communities. The plan is to expand this survey into every county by 2003.

A list of how the census can be used is in Appendix F.



Asset Mapping

Another assessment process to consider is asset mapping. Asset mapping empowers communities to go beyond the scarcity, or needs driven mentality and work from an abundance mentality. It requires having faith in local citizens to help in creating successful community projects.

Asset mapping does not mean the community is unaware of existing conditions or problems or will not need outside resources. It means the community has chosen to identify and mobilize existing resources in new ways.

The beauty of asset mapping is that it can be used to identify individual, institutional and organizational capacity. This broadens the scope of possibilities in terms of existing and potentially useful resources in the community.

Individual Assets

Compiling individual assets can be more challenging or time consuming than group assets. One way to start is by deciding what geographic area you want to cover and how many people you can ask for assistance in that area. Consider the people you know first after you decide which skills will be most useful to your project.

Physical Assets

You can survey physical structures or places including landmarks or unused buildings that can house new or expanding businesses.



Group Assets

You can identify group assets by taking an inventory of all the groups in your community. You can use:

- The yellow pages
- Business information from your local chamber of commerce

- Lists of organizations obtained from your library or city hall
- Local newspapers or newsletters
- Bulletin boards and community calendars

These groups are a fundamental part of community life and well worth the effort.



For more information and examples of ⁷John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight “Building Communities From the Inside Out: A Path Toward Funding and Mobilizing a Communities Assets.

⁷John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight “Building Communities From the Inside Out: A Path Toward Funding and Mobilizing a Communities Assets, ACTA Publications

III. Strategic Planning: Some Tips on How To Get There

**“If you don’t know where you are going, any path will take you there.”
Sioux Proverb**

Strategic planning is a step-by-step process that identifies who you are, where you are, where you want to go, how you want to get there, who will do the work and how much it will cost.

The benefits of strategic planning are that it defines and prioritizes the community’s goals and objectives. It helps ensure the most effective use of community resources by directing resources to priorities. It also provides a base against which projects can be measured. It can bring everyone’s best efforts together and provide ownership to participants in the process.

When should Strategic Planning be done?

Scheduling a strategic planning process depends on the needs of the community or organization. Generally, strategic planning takes place when an organization is just getting started, preparation needs to be done for a new venture, or it is time to plan for the next fiscal year.

Plans should be updated each year. Some planners suggest they be looked at quarterly.

Keeping Your Perspective During Planning

- Far more important than the strategic plan document is the planning process itself
- There is no such thing as a perfect plan, so learn from your experience to make the plan better next time
- The process is continuous and the community is moving forward

Potential Barriers

Be aware of barriers to your planning process and overcome them whenever possible. Some of these barriers are time, resources, and commitment, fear of change, lack of shared vision, values or knowledge.



- One way to overcome time barriers is to incorporate planning items into regular meetings, organize a planning committee, and use a facilitator if possible for your meetings.
- If you do not have the resources to hire a facilitator, perhaps a

volunteer with facilitation skills can be recruited. Training videos and written material on facilitation methods are available through local libraries.

- Discuss the benefits and concerns of strategic planning and come up with ways to maximize benefits and minimize problem areas.
- Think about who should be involved in developing the plan, realizing diversity provides a wide range of ideas and perspectives to enrich the process.
- Take the time and effort to explain personal and organizational values and personal interests within the group.

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goals are the primary strategic targets (programs, projects, and initiatives) of a plan. They support attainment of the vision and are typically supported by short, intermediate, and long-term objectives. They are broad, general and long-term statements that indicate a defined result.



Objectives are short-term goals that your community uses

as intermediate markers of its progress. Objectives are important for a variety of reasons: They serve as a marker to show you (and your community, grant-makers, and other stakeholders) what your initiative has accomplished.

- Helps leaders identify individuals and create work groups to develop project.
- They reemphasize your mission throughout the process of change, which helps keep you, local staff, agencies and other resource people working for the same goals.

When developing objectives, ask yourself if your objectives are **SMART**.

S Are they *specific*? What is to be achieved? What is expected to change, by how much, and by when?

M Are they *measurable*? Can they be collected, detected or obtained from records?

A Are they *achievable*? Are they realistic and yet still challenging?

R Are they *relevant* to the mission? Do they show what your community hopes to accomplish and why?

T Do they include a *timeline* by which they will be achieved?

Once you have identified the objectives, step back and prioritize them to ensure the most significant projects are addressed first.

The SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis is an assessment of the community's **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities** and **threats**. Herein lies the basis of identifying your priorities and strategies. They will come from strengths you want to build on, weaknesses you want to turn into strengths, opportunities you want to take advantage of and threats you want to minimize or avoid.

Examples of SWOT Analysis Issues

Strengths

- Low cost of living
- Potential for growth
- Positive attitude
- Friendly people
- Expanding tax base
- Parks

Weaknesses

- Public Infrastructure
- Few local businesses
- Lack of tax base
- No overnight accommodations
- Lack of health care
- Public transportation

Opportunities

- Proximity to rail, highway, interstate
- Timing is good
- Room for expansion
- Affordable housing
- Recreation

Threats

- No growth attitude
- Apathy
- Lack of affordable housing
- Drugs
- Gangs

Other tips

- Be realistic, and focus on the issues you can do something about

- Be proactive, not reactive
- Realize some issues will emerge based on intuition and “gut feeling” rather than any internal or external assessments
- Have a “devil’s advocate” in the group to make reality checks
- Be cautious that in your attempt to be creative and progressive, you do not ignore other important issues
- Identify issues in order of importance

Action Plans

Action plans are developed after you have determined the vision, mission, objectives and strategies of your community initiative. Developing an action plan will give you a blueprint for running your project. It is always a work in progress and should be dynamic so it can be revised as needs and information change.

Developing Your Action Plan

- **Organize a planning group to design the plan.**

This might be the same group of people who worked with you to decide your community's strategies and objectives. If you decide to organize a new group of people, try to make the committee as diverse and inclusive as possible. Your group



should consist of the people most affected by the problem or issue.

Without any ownership, people who are most affected by the plan may actively or passively resist their part in implementing it. A commitment to inclusiveness will require special attention to the needs of planning participants. The location, frequency and the scheduling of meetings can affect participation. Work assignments should be based on time and interest.

➤ **Develop an action plan composed of action steps that address all proposed changes.**

What steps must you take to carry out your objectives while still fulfilling your vision and mission? Now is the time when all of the components previously discussed (vision, mission, objectives, and strategies) come together. While the plan might address general goals you want to see accomplished, it will also help you determine the specific actions you will take to help make your vision a reality.

A review of some of the Action Plans received by the Department included certain elements. None of the plans reviewed, however, contained all of the elements. The major components are:

- Authorizations and/or certifications that include necessary signatures for board or top management showing approval and support of the plan.
- An organizational description describing the history of the organization, it's major projects and services, teams, team leaders, meeting schedules and other community development contacts.
- Mission and vision statements, which describe the "philosophy" of the group or organization.
- Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- A short-term plan (1-2 years) that provides strategies for infrastructure, business retention, expansion and diversification.
- A longer-term plan that provides for strategies in the key categories (2-5 years).
- A detailed implementation plan makes the action plan complete. It identifies specific tasks, who is responsible for them and when they must be completed. Without this plan there is very little accountability for using the action plan.
- Budget information.

(Note: An executive summary can be a good idea, particularly when it is written so that anyone not involved in the process can grasp the purpose of the organization, major goals and strategies to reach the goals).

- **Review your action plan to make sure it is realistic, flexible and complete.**

Make sure that each proposed change would help accomplish your mission. Look carefully to make sure that nothing is left out. One final review of strengths and weaknesses of the planning process will help determine what can be done within a certain amount of time.

Evaluating Your Action Plan

When you implement your plan you will find that it is necessary to evaluate whether or not it has made a difference. Your evaluation can include a look at your function as a group, as well as your activities and programs. Consider three parts to your evaluation:

- **Outcomes**-Did the desired change or result you wanted, occur? What does success look like?
- **Indicators**-What specific activities or signs will tell you change is taking place?
- **Measure**-What is the actual data or information you will need to collect to show change is taking

place? Measures show you have counted or assessed something.

Methods

There are a variety of methods you can use to conduct your evaluation.

Some include:

- Pre-and-post testing
- Community interviews
- Observations
- Telephone, e-mail or mail surveys
- Staff notes
- Meeting minutes
- Journals

In addition to evaluating your plan, you can evaluate the effectiveness of your group or organization. Appendix D contains a list of questions to ask for your evaluation. There is also an organizational assessment tool in Appendix G. This will assist in obtaining information on how effective your working group is in functions, implementation activities and achievement of missions and goals.

Communicating Your Plan

A communications strategy for community projects is worth considering in the planning process. Different projects may require different strategies, but it is beneficial to ask:

- Who needs to know your message?
- What should you tell?

- Where do you tell it? (Newspapers, radio, community or senior citizen centers, church groups, local businesses)
- When is the best time?
- How should you do it? (press conferences, press releases, direct mailings)

Communicating your plan or project is something that should start early in the strategic planning process. This is partly because it is a good marketing opportunity for local projects. It also gives people a chance to participate or comment early in the process so there are fewer surprises down the road.

Open public meetings and accurate notification of dates and locations should be announced in a variety of ways. Consider distributing the entire plan to major stakeholders. You can post your mission and vision statements in reception areas, on office walls, and meeting rooms. Newsletters, advertising and marketing materials can also be useful in getting the word out.

In some cases you can even include portions of the plan in your employees' policies and procedures manual.

Media Relations

It is to your advantage to develop a good relationship with the media to promote your project. The media can help you by gaining wider recognition,

attracting more supporters who may want to be involved and possibly creating more fundraising opportunities.

Your community's relationship with the media should be mutually beneficial. You have something interesting to convey and the media needs news.

Do not expect the media to cover every activity in which the group is involved. When there is an activity which needs publicity, contact the media well in advance and work with them on how best to get the story out.

In addition to news items, newspapers print



feature stories, and special articles and pictures of important community events. Group meetings can be listed in the newspaper's community calendar. Letters to the editor can also be written to support your efforts.

A communications plan can contain other pieces, including:

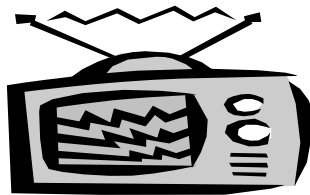
- Brochures
- Fact sheets
- Tours
- Media kits
- Flyers
- Ads
- Newsletters

Many groups are so committed to their activities they have no time available to tell their story. Recognizing the importance of keeping the community informed, groups should routinely contact the media about meetings and activities, and request coverage of important events.

Media Relations Tips

Here are some helpful hints to get your message spread through the media.

- Make contact with the managing editor(s) of the local or regional newspapers. Also get to know the news directors of radio and television stations within your target area.
- Try developing personal business relationships with reporters and editors who cover the news topic that directly affect you.
- Find out and meet the required deadlines to get items into the newspaper, on radio and television newscasts. Know the schedules and formats of television and radio public information programs that might be helpful.
- Keep a current listing of news people, with names and telephone numbers close by.



- Provide a name and telephone listing to the news people so they can contact you.

Interviews

Interviews by the media can sometimes be intimidating. There are some steps you can take to help you feel more relaxed during an interview.

1. Relax. Interviews are generally not interrogations, but friendly conversations. Your information should be honest, positive, simple, quotable or memorable, and you should speak with pride.
2. Compose yourself. Be aware of what your nervous habits are. Everyone has them so try to minimize them.
3. Stay on your own turf. Only answer questions that you have knowledge of and are within your area of responsibilities.
4. Don't speculate on things that are not your responsibility or that you do not have knowledge of.
5. Don't repeat negative language. Turn it to your advantage and put a positive spin on the issue at hand. *Negative Question: Why are you destroying this area to build a road? Positive Answer: This road is being constructed to correct a serious safety problem and to encourage the economic growth of the area.*

6. Similarly, add value to your answers. What is the value of your work to the citizens and the community's future?
7. Talk about solutions, not problems.
8. Do not be afraid to ask a reporter to repeat or restate a question if it is unclear.

There is a great deal of information available on developing media relationships, conducting press releases and effectively answering media questions. You will find how worthwhile it is to develop this aspect as you continue to develop your projects or programs.

IV. Cost Saving Strategies

“Under budgetary pressure...it’s truly remarkable how many options one discovers one can do without”

-James R. Schlesinger
U.S. Secretary of Defense

Special Accounts

Before you acquire debt, it is important to consider a variety of ways the community can protect itself from budget shortfalls. Three ways to do this involves having an operating cash reserve, emergency reserve, and a replacement reserve. These accounts will help correct or offset undesirable side effects of a market economy.

Having an **operating cash reserve** helps to protect your system from cash flow problems. Savings accounts have regular statements and it is usually easy to move money between accounts if it is necessary. They are simple to open and use. The disadvantages are they pay a low rate of interest and there may be service charges.

Emergency reserve funds allow for emergency replacement of major capital facilities. Emergency reserve accounts can also be savings, escrow, trust funds, letters of credit, surety bonds, or guarantees.

Replacement reserves aid in reducing the financial burden of replacing the system and improve the financial “appearance” of the system.

Water System Measures: Increase Income Without Raising Rates

Any dollar placed in the replacement reserve will offset future expenses. In addition to lessening the cost burden of replacing a system, the replacement fund will improve the financial condition of the system, which will facilitate receiving any additional financing.

Sometimes it is possible to increase income for your water system without increasing rates. You can:

- **Conduct a water audit to find unaccounted water on your system.** Unaccounted water may be the result of errors in your records and meters. If your records are not accurate, you may be providing more water than what you are getting paid for. It is a good idea to check the largest meters on your system first. Small errors on big meters can be very costly.

Also **start a meter-testing program** and routinely replace meters that have registered a certain number of gallons or

have been in service a long time.

Make sure you **meter every** connection on your system. If you do not use meters and simply charge a blanket rate, you will never be able to estimate the operating efficiency of the system or set adequate billing rates.

Conduct leak detection surveys.

These pay for themselves. You can conduct the survey yourself or contact the Idaho Rural Water Association or another leak detection service.

Regularly check your system for illegal taps, reversed water meters and other types of theft.

- **Operate more efficiently.** You can do this by:

Developing a good computer billing system that cuts back on employee hours and speeds up the billing process. A more efficient billing system can also improve cash flow and interest income.

Perform an energy audit.

Check all pumps, motors and other electrical equipment to make sure they are operating efficiently. A manufacturer's

representative or the Idaho Rural Water Association can do this.

Purchase items in bulk. Try to purchase items you will need for the year in bulk. If storage is a problem, maybe your supplier might send you partial shipments, as you need them, even though you will have to pay for your supplies in advance.

Make cooperative purchases. Cooperative purchases with other water systems can mean a quantity discount.

- **Revise system policies.** This can be done by:

Establishing “front end” costs, which include membership fees, deposits and construction costs for new installations.

Establish late payment charges.

Late payments deprive you of the gross income for the water the customer used and interest on the money. They are also unfair to customers who pay their bill on time. You might consider charging a late fee and a fee for returned checks. Make sure the customer is very aware of this policy.

Establish a strict due date for payment and disconnect the customers service until the bill is paid in full. A service fee to have the water reconnected may also be appropriate.

Let your money make money. Some systems have sizeable cash reserves in non-interest bearing accounts or low-yield certificates of deposit. Make sure your assets are earning the most for your system.

Communities should also take every opportunity to find ways to save money before looking for outside funding or incurring new debt. Here are some cost saving strategies you might consider.

Local Purchasing

By increasing the “multiplier effect” through local purchasing, citizens, businesses and institutions keep dollars circulating inside the community. Locally owned businesses are more responsive to local needs and values and have more loyalty to the community. It also makes the community more competitive in attracting new business because it shows them that the community supports existing business and would support them as well.

Hire and Include Your Local Workforce

Following the same line of thinking, hiring and involving local workers is a great investment. A community’s most important strength is the capacity of its citizens to work for the common good. People who live and work within the same community tend to be committed to the success of local businesses. This can also result in gaining participation in local planning efforts.

Force Account

Another option is to use city or county employees as project labor. This is referred to as force accounting. This is done often in the Department’s Idaho Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) Program and is even considered an important form of match. The fact that labor costs may be more than half of the total project costs is enough incentive to at least consider this method. Local workers may conduct surveys, direct traffic, take pictures, etc. If force accounting is used, there are several important tips to keep in mind to be successful:

- Plan projects with ample time so that regular community duties are not neglected.
- Determine early who will be the responsible party if something happens. Construction documents and

inspections should be built into the project.

- Predetermine rates for labor and equipment. These should be established and approved by the necessary funding agencies prior to starting construction. This process should include daily time sheets which record the hours charged to the project and the specific work accomplished. Equipment use should be documented the same way so that hourly rates can be established by a local or state standard.

Use Vacant Property

Vacant and abandoned properties are liabilities for local economic development efforts. These properties often contribute to slum and blight situations that create health and safety problems for local citizens.

Communities not only lose the productive use of these properties, but also the tax revenues that can be generated from local projects and services.

These properties also create a liability if the community is trying to attract new business.

Regionalism

Sometimes it is necessary to create cooperative agreements between and among communities and governments

when an issue arises that affects an entire region. By acting together, municipalities can share the burden and costs of potentially expensive and complex regional problems.

Regional organizations can help coordinate these efforts in cases where it is necessary to encompass an area-wide problem. Key people such as elected officials, environmental experts, or interested citizens can help bring about needed cooperation.

The incentives for regional cooperation could be availability of funding where agencies are looking for a cost-effective

solution to the problem. In fact, for certain aspects, inter-local arrangements

are encouraged. If done voluntarily, the different sides of the agreement aren't threatening the other's local autonomy. Each municipality acts in its own best interest. They evaluate the effectiveness of the program and determine the need for continuing the agreement. This way each municipality benefits from cooperating with the other without creating additional entanglements.

These are successful when the problem at hand requires a larger geographic response. Because some



problems are bigger than any one municipality, a united effort must be taken in order to get control of the problem.

- Some local programs are formed in response to the availability of funding. Others are a direct result of federal or state mandates.
- Sharing the costs of area-wide problems ensure that no single community bears the entire brunt of the costs. In most cases, it is impossible for any one city to carry the burden of regional problems. In addition, inter-local agreements may also help reduce expenses by purchasing items in bulk that may have a quantity discount.

Having a regional organization or council allows for views and input from multiple sources. They get to know the state officials and learn about and secure educational materials, grants and other important resources. Having an organization is very beneficial when it comes to making decisions and coordinating the specific administrative actions. This helps to accomplish tasks that might otherwise be impossible.

Advantages to Regionalization

Organize regionally is the mantra of many community development practitioners. Economic opportunities, for example can

increase greatly if communities can tie in to the regional economy.

Regionalization offers many other important advantages. These include:

- **Greater Economies Of Scale**

By joining forces, communities might be able to implement a project that otherwise would be too expensive for a single community. Combining personnel, financial, administrative, and any equipment resources spread the cost of pursuing certain projects among several jurisdictions. This will bring projects within the financial reach of many small and rural communities.

- **Increased Financial Support**

Regionalization can provide greater leverage in obtaining the financial resources needed for community activities. For example, some agencies give priority to regional efforts when disbursing grants or other forms of financial support.

- **Increased Flexibility**

Regionalization opens up new possibilities because of the greater resources available and the improved economies of scale. With more opportunities available, communities are able to develop strategies tailored to

their specific needs and concerns.

Potential Barriers to Regionalization

Although regionalization offers many advantages, potential barriers also exist. Examples include:

- **Different Project Goals**

While neighboring communities share many common needs and concerns, disparities in population, geography, industrial base, or other characteristics may make it difficult for communities to agree upon specific regional projects.

- **Varying Regulations**

Regions that include several counties might need to resolve issues raised by contradictory or conflicting laws and regulations.

- **Potential Inequities**

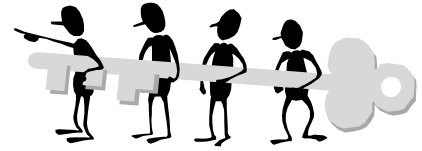
Communities who are considering regionalization should recognize that the costs and benefits of regional projects, although shared, would not necessarily be identical for all communities. Tradeoffs might have to be made.

These and other potential barriers should be explored thoroughly before embarking on any regional strategy. If a potential barrier is identified early

on, it is likely that an effective solution can be found. By acknowledging the potential obstacles

at the beginning,

communities can take constructive steps to overcome these challenges



Recycle Waste

With a little ingenuity, a community can turn their trash into valuable resources, while also generating revenue. First, to develop a successful waste or recycling program, you must educate your citizens. Then you might be able to try projects such as:

- Landscape waste (such as tree trimmings) can be used in a variety of capacities to create job opportunities and beautify local neighborhoods.
- Food waste (often from kitchens, schools, churches, businesses, cafeterias, or supermarkets) can be used for compost, and in turn, be used in community garden projects.
- Toxic wastes (paint, turpentine, and household products) can be collected and redistributed at community exchanges instead of being dumped. This would help to reduce potential threats to local groundwater supplies.

- Recyclable goods (cans, bottles, paper, plastics, and scrap metals) could be collected and sold to industries that remanufacture recycled goods. If they could be sold locally, this could help create new jobs and encourage local spending.

When determining whether to recycle or dispose of things, a material's weight, volume, and handling time on the collection route interact to determine the actual cost of collecting the material. It might actually cost more, in some cases, to recycle than to simply dispose of materials. These examples are simply suggestions that may or may not work for your individual community, but are worth exploring.



These are just a few examples you can consider to save money. If you have other cost saving strategies that have worked in your community, it is important to share them with others.

V. Contracting for Professional Services

“No one person can accomplish much if they don’t work with others.”

**-Daniel Levinson
Chief Justice,
U. S. Supreme Court**

There are a number of professionals you will need to consult with, and ultimately hire, in order to complete your community project. The success of any project often depends upon hiring and consulting the most able, experienced and reputable professionals available. Ideally it would be nice to have objective and impartial individuals guide the process. If resources are available to work with a consultant, whether it is for conducting an assessment or engineering a sewer plant, it is critical to be totally involved in the plans and decisions that are made.

Design Professionals

An engineer or architect can provide you with information on applicable regulations, the permit process, and other authorizations from appropriate regulatory agencies.

When considering which professionals to choose, remember that qualifications are as important as cost. Considering only costs when comparing allows the



selection process to become biased toward the lowest fee rather than quality. It becomes important then to rely on both, to ensure you hire the best consultants for your project.

When deciding, choose professionals on the basis of such things as competence, managerial ability, availability of resources, professional independence, fairness of fee structure, professional integrity and quality assurance systems.

A competent design professional should be able to offer you a team that will have the education, training, practical experience and knowledge to carry out the project.

You will need to know some specific information from all potential candidates in order to make an informed decision. The information should include an assessment of the physical magnitude and resource requirements of the project. Some critical elements to use when comparing potential architects/engineers are:

- Applicable experience
- Scope of services (work plan)

- Relationship with the community
- Availability
- Flexibility to work with local staff or volunteers
- Innovation and ideas on how to save money
- Costs
- References

Selection of design professionals is a key component in the project development process. With that in mind, it is still critical that you stay active in the planning and design stages. The design professional is employed to make proposals, write reports, prepare the design and provide oversight. The final decision about which design to choose rests solely with those who pay the bill. The project should be a reflection of what your community desires for itself. While it is important to trust professionals, that does not imply handing over all responsibility for the project design to them. Essentially the design professional should be willing to work in partnership with you, local staff, and citizens. In the end, your input will help guide professionals and ensure the project is the best match for your community.

Quality Based Selection (QBS)

Since July 1, 1998, Idaho Code 67-2320 requires QBS for project professionals, including architects, land surveyors, and construction managers when the estimated cost of

these services exceeds \$25,000. If the professional services are estimated to cost over \$25,000, the project services must be advertised in a formal manner.



There are many advantages to QBS:

- Selection is based on qualifications and not the lowest bid.
- The process allows for the local government to match each project to the firm best qualified to provide the required services.
- The owner has control over the project through a collaborative relationship with the consultant.
- Total project costs, including operation and maintenance, are typically lower.
- The consultant has the ability to discuss with the local government what the project needs are, and meets those needs within a negotiated budget.

Legal Professionals

In addition to design professionals, you may also need to consult with legal counsel on a variety of issues.

The municipal attorney can provide knowledge, continuity, and an extensive understanding of community needs over a long period of time. The active assistance of the municipal attorney can provide support and

encouragement to help your project move ahead. A municipal attorney has a unique understanding of municipal law and can be someone who thinks creatively about legal ways to keep your community project moving forward.

If a municipal attorney is not available, you may need to hire outside counsel. An attorney can provide much needed guidance on complicated issues like contracts and other legal documents.

It may be necessary to hire **bond counsel** if you believe that you need to borrow money, issue and sell bonds, or form a local improvement district (LID) to fund your project. Bond counsel can provide the legal advice necessary to ensure you meet all the procedural requirements. They can also provide advice on federal and state laws that affect the financing of your project.

Economic Development Districts

Economic Development Districts (EDDs) are regional organizations that provide planning assistance, economic analysis, grant writing assistance, and information on various economic development programs and loan funds. EDDs also assist communities in all aspects of attracting new business and industry as well as helping existing business with expansion opportunities. In addition, they provide census data and regional revolving loan fund financing.

These organizations are also known as Planning Districts or Regional Planning Organizations.

Idaho Department of Commerce

Idaho Department of Commerce (IDOC) offers a variety of technical assistance to communities. Several competitive grant programs are administered, including: Idaho Community Development Block Grants (ICDBG), Rural Community Block Grants (RCBG), Gem Community Implementation (GCI) Grants as well as the Idaho Regional Travel and Convention (ITC) Grant Program, which provides funding for travel promotion. Most of these grants are designed to help Idaho communities improve their infrastructure and encourage business development. For more information, contact the IDOC at (208) 334-2470.

VI. Successful Strategies for Preparing Funding Proposals

“Money is of no value; it cannot spend itself. All depends on the skill of the spender.”

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

American Essayist and Poet

Research Funding Possibilities

One of the most important elements of writing a successful grant application involves researching potential funding sources. Make a list starting with the funding sources that have the highest probability of funding your project.

After you make your list, eliminate those sources that will require your organization to significantly change your project or to stretch its objectives to fit the objectives of the funding source. It is better to send fewer requests to the most appropriate organizations than it is to send requests to many organizations that do not share a common purpose.

Contact Funding Options

Once you have identified the potential funding source, you will want to contact key people within those organizations to help you plan your proposal. It is important to make sure your approach is appropriate. For example, many government agencies and private foundations prefer a phone call or a letter of inquiry first, while others will want you to send them a full proposal.



Request Materials

You will want to request application materials and guidelines and maybe even copies of grants funded in the past or the names of successful communities.

Read all application materials thoroughly before you start filling anything out. Make sure you understand exactly what is required of you. Don't be afraid to contact the organization (unless the guidelines clearly indicate otherwise) with any questions you might have. Prepare your questions in advance and be as specific as possible. The funding representative can be your advocate and a great asset to you if they believe you are serious, organized and prepared.

Writing the Proposal

Grant writing can be a complicated process. Hiring someone with the necessary skills to prepare your grant application can put your community at a definite advantage. Like it or not, packaging is an important component in determining who will be awarded grant money. Professional grant writers are more likely to know how to prepare a complete application, where

funding sources are available, when money is available and what the share of the costs are for your community.

It is important to do some research to make sure you hire the right professional for your community. Noted earlier, each type of grant has different requirements and is on a different funding cycle. Being aware of these specifics can be the difference between getting funded or not. Most grants are competitive so the stronger your application, the more likely you are to get the funds necessary to complete your project(s).



When writing the proposal, put yourself in the reviewer's shoes. Traditionally there are nine basic components in a solid proposal

package. These sections may have different names with different funding sources but they are, in one form or another, in most grant proposals.

1. Proposal summary
2. Applicant information
3. Need and impact/project beneficiaries
4. Citizen participation
5. Project objectives
6. Project methods or design
7. On-going maintenance and operation
8. Project budget/schedule
9. Appendices

Proposal Summary

The proposal summary appears at the beginning of the proposal and outlines the project. It can be a cover letter or a separate page. It should be brief, no longer than a page unless the funding source requires something else. Generally, a summary should be prepared after the proposal has been fully developed. This allows you to include all the key elements necessary to communicate the objectives of the project. The initial impression it gives the reviewer will be crucial to the success of your project.

Applicant Information

Many proposals require a description of an applicant's organization. This generally includes the applicant's past, present, and projected operations. Some options to consider are:



- A brief biography of key staff and board members.
- The community's organizational values, goals, past record as a grantee, and success stories.

Need and Impact/Project Beneficiaries

The needs assessment, or problem statement, is another key element of your proposal. Be prepared to show why your project should be funded more than other applicants you are

competing with. It should be clear, concise, and include well-supported statements of the problem that needs to be addressed. Areas to document include:

- The purpose for developing the proposal.
- How the project matches the agency's goals.
- How citizens will benefit from the proposal.
- The social and economic benefits to the project area or region.
- The nature of the problem (provide as much documentation as possible).
- How the community came to realize the problem exists, and what is currently being done about the problem.
- The remaining alternatives available when funding has been exhausted. Explain what will happen if the project is not funded and the impending implications.
- Most importantly, the specific manner through which problems might be solved. Review the resources needed, considering how they will be used and to what end.

Citizen Participation

The involvement and support of citizens in project development and application and implementation of a project is essential for success. Citizens and local government leaders have a mutual responsibility to communicate and have their views

heard and advocate their special interests. Citizens who have access to the political process are more likely to have ownership and a sense of community cohesiveness. Communities should reach out to non-English speaking residents by involving an interpreter or preparing information in their language. Meeting places must be accessible to everyone and written information should be available in alternative formats if needed.

Project Objectives

Project objectives should clearly describe the expected results and benefits of the project, be measurable and verifiable. Keep in mind that if the proposal is funded, the stated objectives will most likely be used to evaluate the progress of your project, so be realistic.

You should show you have researched many other funding options and solutions to the problem. Include why you have selected one solution over all others.

Project Method or Design

The project method outlines the tasks that will be accomplished with the available resources. The design refers to how the project is expected to work and solve the stated problem. It is most helpful to structure the project method as a timeline. Early in the planning process, applicants should list tasks that will have to be

completed to meet the goals of the project. You can then break these into smaller tasks and lay them out in a schedule over the grant period. This will provide a chance to determine what personnel, materials, and other resources will be needed to carry out the project.

On-going Maintenance and Operation

You may be asked to list expected sources of continuing funding after the conclusion of the grant. In addition, you may also be required to list other sources and amounts of funding obtained for the project. You will want to discuss the community's maintenance and operation capability. This will also show your funding source that they will be making a good investment in a long-term solution.

Project Budget/Schedule

Specific expenses should be outlined in detail in the project budget. Budget figures must be closely estimated based upon actual costs of items, engineer's estimates, and similar



projects currently underway. One way to track your project expenses is to divide the budget into categories such as administration, planning, construction, etc. Many grant applications require a line item

budget. This document should show how funds will be spent and by whom.

Make certain that implementation, continuation, and phase-down costs can be met. Consider costs associated with leases, evaluation systems, hard/soft match requirements, implementation audits, development and maintenance of information and accounting systems and other long-term financial commitments.

A well-prepared budget justifies all the expenses and is consistent with the original proposal objectives.

Appendices

The amount of information you can include in the Appendix is usually determined by the granting agency. This is the place for information that will show how important your project is and substantiate what was referenced in the application.

Extraneous materials or fillers are easily detected by evaluators and can make your the project appear weak or flawed. Information to include:

- ✓ Statistics
- ✓ Engineering Studies
- ✓ Architectural Plans
- ✓ Survey Reports
- ✓ Funding Commitments
- ✓ Project Photos
- ✓ Action Plans showing how the project is part of an overall economic and community development effort

Other Information Needs Include: Community Commitment

Be prepared to demonstrate full commitment to the project. Community leaders must provide visible leadership from the project development phase to the completion of the project. This leadership is a powerful symbol of local commitment. Reliance on the expertise of grant writers and other professionals in the project may be necessary. However, leaders should be involved and take ownership in all stages of the decision making process.

Match and Commitment

Local or other match is very often required for proposals to be competitive. It is important to determine what the funding agent requires. A letter or signed form is usually enough proof of match commitment. For the ICDBG the following sources are accepted:

Matching funds include:

- Cash donations, capital reserves, program income
- Cash resulting from debt financing
- Local Improvement District assessments
- General obligation or revenue bonds
- Force account
- Land donations
- Labor donations
- Material or equipment donations
- Waiver of local fees

- Other government funds-state, federal foundations sources
- Individual donors
- Business donors
- Corporations
- Private foundations

Requirements for IDOC grants are covered in various application handbooks, workshops and the IDOC Web site.

Mapping

Area and site specific mapping is a very important part of a proposal. The funding organization will want to know the exact location of the project, existing and proposed uses, environmental conditions, etc. Some of the mapping requirements of the ICDBG Program, for example, include:

- ✓ Benefit area boundaries
- ✓ Zoning
- ✓ Environmental conditions
- ✓ Population by race
- ✓ Census tract boundaries
- ✓ Historic district boundaries
- ✓ Local Improvement and Business Improvement District boundaries
- ✓ Jurisdictional boundaries (taxing district boundaries, etc.)
- ✓ Required easements
- ✓ Site improvements
- ✓ Land ownership
- ✓ Surrounding ownership (plus easements and Right of Way)

- ✓ Existing and proposed transportation

Applicants are always encouraged to work closely with the granting agency's project manager. This line of communication has been shown through the years to provide a distinct advantage to the applicant for several reasons:

- Staff can make an early determination on the potential competitiveness of a project and assist in maximizing an applicant's competitiveness.
- Staff can provide technical assistance in the project development phase, thus helping applicants avoid or minimize potential problem areas.
- Staff can educate applicants on state and federal requirements so project development is focused on providing quality information.
- Good communication reflects a spirit of cooperation and commitment to the project.

Grant Administration Capacity

- Grant applicants should make certain that once they receive the grant they will be able to manage and administer it, either in house, or by contracting with a professional.

Most grant administrators must be knowledgeable in the following areas:

- Compliance with applicable state, federal or foundation requirements, including all documentation and reporting requirements
- Management of all phases and activities of a project
- Proper budgeting and record keeping practices
- Ability to perform on-going project monitoring
- Maintenance of files for inspection
- Ability to submit timely and complete reports
- Trouble shooting to solve scheduling, funding and compliance problems
- Communicating requirements to local officials, other agencies, engineers, architects, contractors, businesses and citizens
- Communicating with the funding organization on projects status or any issues or problems that may arise

The IDOC also has a list of Certified Grant Administrators in good standing. These are individuals who qualify to administer ICDBGs. This list is available through the IDOC's



Rural and Community Development Division.

Tips for Writing Successful Proposals

The Foundation News and Commentary, March-April 2000⁸ issue noted the top tips in getting a proposal through the process. A query of all types of funding organizations from across the country was done. Nine areas emerged consistently. Those surveyed stressed that if an applicant even addresses any of the top three or four pieces of advice, they would definitely have a big advantage over other applicants. The advice:

- **Do Your Homework.**
Make certain your project will advance the mission of the agency or organization from where you are requesting funds.
- **Follow Directions**
This sounds simple, but pay attention to what the funding source requires.
- **Be Concise – More Is Not Better**
Get to the meat of the proposal fast. Lots of narrative or enclosures do not mean the project is better.

⁸ Linda A. Long, “The Inner Secrets of Successful Proposals. Top Tips On Getting Your Proposal Through, Straight From The People That Know Best What Works: Funders,” Foundation News & Commentary, March/April 2000, Vol. 14, No. 2

- **Clarity Counts**
Avoid highbrow language and concepts. Plain spoken and reality based language is much preferred.
- **Have Someone Edit and Proofread Your Application**
An objective pair of eyes can help grant writers avoid tragic errors that give the evaluator the impression that he/she doesn’t care.
- **Show Collaborate Efforts**
Try as much as possible to show a history of thoughtful, collaborative efforts and capacity building by including documentation of your partnerships.
- **Practice “Truth in Asking”**
Never tell a budgetary lie. Inflating numbers is a no-no. Finances that make sense along with a detailed budget will communicate openness and honesty. Cost estimates must be based upon solid evidence.
- **Think, “Blueprint”**
Accountability is key. Applicants need to show the capacity to deliver.
- **Show the Potential for Future Sustainability**
Portray your funding organization as a catalyst for change rather than a perpetual benefactor.

- **Do not ask a grant writer to write an application unless you are ready.** Most projects should be ready to go in six months.
- **Do not try to make your project fit the funding agency goals.** If your project is not consistent with the objectives of the funding agency, don't apply.
- **Keep the appropriate people or groups in the loop** as you develop your project.
- **Be prepared to show any documents** or any other type of records relevant to the development of your project. Keep a complete and current set of these records in one location.
- **Your project can be more competitive if it benefits a greater number of people** than a small group.
- **Know your application deadlines.** Exceptions will not usually be made, particularly in a competitive process. All rules apply to everyone.
- **Have everything you need in the application by the deadline.** If you are asked to provide additional information, it will be for clarification and not addendum purposes.

The next page identifies common problems found in applications, specific to the ICDBG Program. These problems and the suggested solutions may also be useful when applying from other funding sources.

ICDBG Applications:

Common Problems and Solutions

IDOC staff conducted a review of weak areas in ICDBG applications. These areas need attention for applications to be more competitive.

Common Problems	Suggested Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimal involvement of local officials, suggesting a lack of commitment to the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local officials must be involved with the project from the beginning without feeling intimidated by contracting professionals or grant writers. Applicants must also commit local match to the project.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project appears to have a low job creation potential.• Business is not a partner.• Joint venture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include business commitment in application through the Certification of Compliance with Grant Conditions form. Information must identify specific jobs that will be created, wages, benefits, full time or part time and describe a process for hiring.• Discuss grant requirements with business officers/owners and obtain signatures on Business Assistance Agreement.• Economic Development grant projects are a joint venture between community and business.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project design, costs or size inappropriate for project type.• Better engineering/costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show a number of alternatives have been reviewed and substantiate selection of chosen project design as best alternative.• Ask for a greater engineering analysis and detail of costs with explanation of costs and uncertainties.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information on project location and project activities unclear.• Vague or non-existing information on current conditions as compared to what is proposed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide detailed maps that show existing conditions vs. proposed project; existing land uses, environmental conditions; and project boundaries that clearly show the location of project beneficiaries.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need and impact data is weak. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with IDOC Community Development staff to assess eligibility (this should be done early in the project development process). • Do not submit the application prematurely. • Stress health and safety factors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project need appears to be based on lack of maintenance and neglect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include substantial documentation showing the actions the community has taken in the previous five years to address the problem.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No reference to commitment of resources to continue to operate the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Operation and Maintenance Plan and/or a Facilities Management Plan must be included to show planning and local commitment to use new facilities (applied for) and protect public and private investments.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding commitments weak. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include signed letters or forms (as required) verifying funding commitments to the project are firm. Information must include exactly what other funds or match will pay for.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project is controversial and not supported by members of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide documentation of planning activities, Public Hearings, and other communications with citizens. • Provide information showing opportunities for citizen involvement were provided during all phases of project development and application preparation. • Include responses to verbal or written concerns. • Keep the IDOC informed of the process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income survey information is incomplete. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to submit survey boundary map showing areas that were surveyed as well as income questionnaire and methodology.

Table of Contents for Appendices

A	Diversity Accountability Questionnaire
B	Identifying Community or Project Stakeholders
C	Sources of Information for Community Assessments
D	Community Assessment Checklist (for Economic Development Readiness)
E	Infrastructure Inventory
F	Use of Census Data
G	Organizational Assessment Tool

DIVERSITY ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Focus on your organization/community as you read the following ten questions. Then place a check mark in the appropriate column.

<u>Questions</u>	<u>Almost Always</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Almost Never</u>
1. Bicultural/bilingual staff is hired to reflect the population served.				
2. Informational materials match the languages of the population base.				
3. Products and services are designed with help from community liaisons.				
4. Resources are utilized to educate employees about cross-cultural norms of the communities served.				
5. Employees from all backgrounds eat, joke, and talk together.				
6. All signs are English only, despite a multilingual population.				
7. Managers are held accountable for building cohesive diverse teams.				
8. Committees, teams, boards are selected without paying attention to the community population represented.				
9. Employees are open to learning about and caring for ethnic populations different from their own.				
10. There is a genuine respect for ethnic, gender, language, and religious differences.				

DIRECTIONS FOR SCORING

Score numbers 1 through 5, 7, 9, and 10 in the following way:

Almost Always = 4

Often = 3

Sometimes = 2

Almost Never = 1

Score numbers 6 and 8 in the following way:

Almost Always = 1

Often = 2

Sometimes = 3

Almost Never = 4

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. Total:

The closer the score is to a 40-point total, the more an organization/community is perceived to be accountable for maintaining inclusive practices.

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

Develop a Diversity Definition and Action Statement:

Develop a Community Strategy:

1. Provide access to education, awareness, and training on cultural diversity issues to members of your community.
2. Develop and share your community's diversity definition and action statement to members of your community.
3. Convene a diversity/inclusion team.
4. Go beyond awareness – weave diversity into all aspects of your community.
5. Promote and support cultural diversity events.
6. Support diversity efforts in your organization and in your community.
7. Communicate your commitment to inclusive practices and behaviors.
8. Develop a community agenda with representatives from various cultural groups in order to integrate the diverse issues that are important to different people in your community/region.

IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY OR PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

Task 1:

Name about six persons who you think have the most influence on general community affairs in your community, regardless of whether or not you approve of the way they use their influence.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Occupation</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Name two or three people whom you consider to be the most influential leaders in each of the following specialized areas. A person may be named in more than one area.

<u>Area</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Occupation/Position</u>
Business, Industry, Banking and Utilities	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Politics and Government	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Health and Medicine	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

<u>Area</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Occupation/Position</u>
Real Estate	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Education	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Religion	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
News Media	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Labor	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Law and Law Enforcement	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Agricultural and Rural	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Ethnic Groups	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Women	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**Young People
(up and coming
who you think will
become leaders)**

Task 2:

Make a list of individuals who are affected by or who can affect the future of the project. Consider bankers, realtors, public officials, merchants, labor, education, minority groups, news media, etc.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>

Task 3:

Name three or four organizations, agencies, groups or positions that you think have the most influence on general community affairs. These may be civic or service organizations, governmental positions, agencies or bodies, business or industrial organizations or even informal groups or cliques. Then rank these groups from the most influential to the least influential.

<u>Organization/Agency/Position</u>	<u>Rank</u>

Task 4:

List groups who will be affected by this project or who can affect the future of the project.

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Key Leader</u>

Sources of Information for Community Assessments

Sources of information range from existing, ongoing, agency-gathered data, such as the census, to locally developed information, such as attitude surveys or labor market inventories. The following are examples of agencies, offices, businesses, and other public sources that have information.

a. University Extension Centers. Located in nearly every county or parish seat in the U.S. Have access to a wide variety of published information ranging from the Census of U.S. Population data to specific studies of various public and private issues. Can access the Land-Grant University of the state for expertise and data. In some states that is more limited to Agriculture and Home Economics and in others the resources are much broader.

b. Libraries. Most communities have some type of library either as a separate public institution or a public school library. There is also a state library in every state, accessible to the public of that state. The material available locally will vary a great deal depending on the resources it has to operate. However, most local libraries can request additional resources from the state library. Census data, business and commercial data, vital statistics (birth and death data), local histories, and much more may be found in the libraries.

c. Courthouse. The courthouse contains information on property assessments, budgets for county government facilities and services, tax rates on property, vital statistics, property records and plats, county road systems, county planning and zoning records, tax revenues and expenditure patterns over time, crime statistics and patterns, rural health conditions, election results and statistics, agriculture, family economics, youth programs, special districts, and traffic conditions.

d. City Hall. City budget, tax revenues, city plan, street patterns and condition, level of city services (police, fire, utilities), crime statistics, population data for city, housing conditions.

e. Public School. School enrollment, drop-out rates, standard test scores, school population projections, school budgets, tax revenues and levies, projected needs for educational investments.

f. College/Tech Schools. Population and housing data, college projection for higher education, employment projections in various vocational areas, experts and data on a variety of technical subjects.

g. Social Services Office. Welfare load, numbers of people in need by various categories, income statistics, housing conditions, employment needs and skill levels, handicapped numbers and types of handicaps with specialized needs, nursing home needs.

h. Hospital. Current beds and vacancy rates, emergency care numbers and types, types and rates of various illnesses, costs of care, health care personnel needs.

i. Banks. Economic conditions, deposits, capital available for loan, services available to new businesses, location of empty business space, housing sales and available housing.

j. Newspaper. Community history, stories about earlier planning processes, dates of events, participants in various activities, community statistical data.

k. Chamber of Commerce. Local businesses, promotions, employment in various occupations and businesses, types of merchandise available, community assets, tourist businesses and attractions.

l. United Way. Social service organizations in the community, budget for social services, additional needs, lists of volunteers, community willingness to contribute time and money.

m. Regional Planning Office. Not in all areas, Often have all of the population, housing, income, employment data already at hand. May have done special studies on water quality, waste disposal, utility needs, transportation needs, emergency services, etc., for the region or for parts of the region. Also, many of them do industrial recruitment and other economic development activities for members of their region.

n. Yellow Pages. A valuable source for finding various types of businesses, developing numbers on businesses, establishing gaps in available services and products. Also lists governmental and private non-profit agencies and organizations. Provides phone number and, often, names of contacts.

o. Basic Census Data.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

APPEARANCE

YES NO

How would the route from the airport into a meeting place in town look to an investor coming to your community for the first time? _____

Would he or she get the impression that people have pride in your area? _____

Is the route well-landscaped? _____

Does the highway have dirt shoulders? _____

Is there litter along the way or ramshackle buildings that should be torn down? _____

Are the sidewalks downtown well-cared for? _____

Are the streets well-paved? _____

Are there trees or plants along downtown streets? _____

Are storefronts painted and well-kept? _____

Or does everything look bare, with broken curbs and sidewalks and trash along the way? _____

Are your parks and recreation areas inviting (landscaped, attractive, clean, well cared for)? _____

Are your central business district and shopping areas attractive (landscaped, free of trash, storefronts painted and in good repair)? _____

How would you rank your community's appearance? _____

☐ Superior ☐ Excellent ☐ Average ☐ Below average ☐ Poor

What would bring it up to the level you want it to be? _____

ATTITUDES TOWARD GROWTH (BUSINESS AND POLITICAL CLIMATE)

How will prospective business creators in your community be treated:

Will they be welcomed? _____

Will local officials do their best to make it easy for them to get started? _____

Will they be given a checklist of the things they need to do and be shown how to quickly work through the list? _____

Do you have a one-stop place where they can go to get all the information they need to meet local planning and zoning requirements? _____

Will they be treated in a courteous, businesslike way? _____

How are people already in business in your area treated:

Do they get the red carpet treatment they deserve as the people who produce the jobs, payrolls and taxes you need to maintain and improve your quality of life? _____

Do elected officials have a positive attitude toward healthy growth? _____

Do they support your development efforts? _____

Are your local taxes reasonable and fair? _____

How long has it been since property was reappraised? _____

	YES	NO
Does your local government have an updated master plan?	—	—
Does it have a long-range capital improvement program based on recent engineering and planning analysis of infrastructure and other needs?	—	—
Are local business leaders actively involved in the governmental process and concerned with the efficiency of local government?	—	—
Do they act to correct political inaction on important issues as well as any excesses?	—	—
How would you rate your area's business climate?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Below average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
What steps can you take to improve that rating?		

AVAILABLE BUILDINGS AND COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL SITES

Do you have a good, up-to-date inventory of commercial and industrial sites and buildings?	—	—
Are those buildings of a quality and size that would appeal to most prospects?	—	—
Are your prices competitive?	—	—
Can you get a company into a building quickly?	—	—
Can you have a site ready to build on within 90 to 120 days?	—	—
Do you have at least one first-rate industrial or commercial park of at least 100 acres (preferably 500 for many areas) ready to go—that is:		
- utilities and services installed?	—	—
- access roads built?	—	—
- environmental studies completed?	—	—
- ready to build on?	—	—
- rail and highway access in place?	—	—
Do you have a variety of quality sites and buildings in a variety of settings (rail and highway access; highway only; high, limited, or no visibility)?	—	—
How would you rate your area's available sites and buildings?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Below average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
How can you improve your site and building rating?		

CHILD CARE

Are there adequate child care facilities available for parents who work?	—	—
Are the programs well-managed and highly rated by parents whose children participate?	—	—
If your community doesn't have such a program, what arrangements can you make?		
If your community already has an acceptable program, is it able to handle all the children that workers want to have participate?	—	—
Does it need to be expanded?	—	—
Can you offer the program to new companies that may want to consider locating in your area—that is, do you have additional capacity or plans to expand it if needed?	—	—

	YES	NO
<u>COMMUNICATIONS</u>		
Is your area served by fiber optic cable?	___	___
Do you have total digital switching?	___	___
Do you have multi-media data service (MMDS)?	___	___
Are E911 enhanced emergency services available in your area?	___	___
Do you have central office-based PBX services?	___	___
Do you have "SmartCall" services available?	___	___
Are telemarketing circuits available?	___	___
Do you have digital private line circuits?	___	___
<u>COMMUNITY and/or AREA DATA SUMMARY</u>		
Do you have a brief but complete local data summary that uses effective graphics to tell your basic data story?	___	___
Are there other communities nearby that offer additional attractions that can at least help bring commuting jobs to your city or town?	___	___
Do you also have an area or regional data summary that presents, in no more than eight pages, essential information on your area?	___	___
Do you cooperate with nearby towns in an area or regional development effort that can benefit everyone in your area?	___	___
If not, can you develop such a program to take advantage of the attractions offered by the total economic resources of the larger area, such as industrial sites, labor pool, and transportation resources?	___	___
<u>EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING SYSTEMS</u>		
How do your schools compare with top-quality schools elsewhere?		
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>much better</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>a little better</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>about the same</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>a little worse</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>much worse</i>		
Is the drop-out rate higher or lower? ___ <i>higher</i> ___ <i>lower</i>		
Are you spending as much per student?	___	___
Do your schools offer special courses that compare well with other schools?	___	___
If not, can you persuade local school officials to review their present curricula and develop additional courses?	___	___
How do your elementary and secondary schools rate in comparison to your state as a whole?		
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>much better</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>a little better</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>about the same</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>a little worse</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>much worse</i>		
Do your schools offer special courses for both underprivileged and outstanding students?	___	___
Are your schools of sufficiently high quality to be acceptable to highly educated executives and managers who may move to your area?	___	___
Do your counselors guide those not going to college onto career paths that will help them make the best use of their abilities and find available jobs?	___	___
Can employers get the people they need from your vocational/technical schools?	___	___
Are your vo-tech programs keyed to the needs of local firms?	___	___
What special training programs do you now have that could benefit potential employers?	___	___

	YES	NO
Do you need to develop additional training programs?	—	—
If so, can one or more of your local universities, colleges or vocational/technical schools develop special training programs?	—	—
If not, can you persuade their leadership to gear up to provide special training programs if you attract a company that requires them?	—	—
Are state subsidies available?	—	—
If not, what would you be willing to offer a major employer who would hire people from your local workforce only if they receive special training?	—	—
<hr/>		
<u>ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES</u>		
Does your area have acceptable waste disposal programs in place and operational—solid waste, hazardous waste, recycling?	—	—
If not, what do you need to do to be able to measure up to your likely competitors?	—	—
<hr/>		
Do you need to persuade local officials to take action to develop new programs?	—	—
If your local governments don't have the funds needed to develop essential programs, could you set up an action team to talk with local government officials about increasing its efficiency so that money can be reallocated for environmental and other projects?	—	—
Do you know whether any of your established firms have waste disposal problems (e.g., spending substantial sums to dispose of waste because of local program deficiencies)?	—	—
If you don't have such information, can you prepare a survey that will determine if you need to solve a problem in order to keep established companies from spending money for waste disposal that their competitors don't spend?	—	—
Do your environmental programs create difficulties for you as you compete for new payrolls?	—	—
Do your local and state environmental review personnel provide quick and reasonable resolutions to environmental issues?	—	—
If not, what steps can you take to make sure they do?	—	—
<hr/>		
<u>FINANCIAL RESOURCES</u>		
Do you have the bonding capacity you need to finance major physical improvements important to adding new employers?	—	—
Does your community have a tax base large enough to make needed improvements?	—	—
Do your local governments have a strong enough budget to be able to finance special training programs if such programs are needed to attract a company you want to bring to your area?	—	—
Do local governments have the financial strength necessary to upgrade or replace, if necessary, outmoded and decaying water and sewer systems?	—	—
Or will they have to do what one community did—raise the sewer connection fee for new housing from \$500 to \$5,000 per house (thereby killing its chances of attracting new investors)?	—	—

COST OF LIVING**YES NO**

How does your area's cost of living compare with other areas?

☐ *Superior* ☐ *Excellent* ☐ *Average* ☐ *Below average* ☐ *Poor*

If it is above average, is so high that it discourages people from moving there?

Is there one cost category that is especially high?

More than one?

Is your high category important to the average worker?

Is there any way you can bring it down?

Does your area have an overall quality of life, amenities, and attractions that make it attractive enough to offset a higher cost of living?

If so, do people outside the area know that?

What can be done to reduce the cost of one or more factors?

GOVERNMENT

Have local officials been able to maintain balanced budgets?

Have they done so at the expense of maintaining roads or water and sewer systems, recreational facilities, or other services important to your economic development marketing?

Do they have sound, problem-oriented planning programs?

Are capital improvement programs based on realistic assessment of needs and on realistic numbers?

Is property reassessed on a regular basis?

Do severe disparities exist in the taxes paid by some homeowners because of failure to reassess?

Are assessments on commercial and industrial property excessive?

HEALTH CARE

Do you have one or more hospitals that can provide tertiary medical services, or are such services available at a hospital in a nearby community?

Do your hospitals offer special emergency care for cardiac patients?

Are your hospitals highly rated for the quality of the care they provide?

Does at least one of your local hospitals have the latest diagnostic and treatment equipment available, such as LLLT (low level laser therapy) equipment that has been developed for industrial problems such as carpal tunnel syndrome?

HOUSING

Does your community have a good supply of moderately priced and low-cost housing?

How do housing prices in your area compare with other areas with which you compete for jobs?

Are housing prices in your area relatively stable?

If not, have they gone up rapidly in recent years?

	YES	NO
Do you have a good variety of available housing—different styles and different locations?	—	—
Do you have an adequate supply of quality housing for incoming executives?	—	—
Do you have an inventory of executive type housing available?	—	—
If not, do you have one or more builders capable of quickly constructing the quality housing you may need on relatively short notice?	—	—
Are your builders considered reliable and fair?	—	—
Does your local government or any of your banks have a vigorous low-cost housing program?	—	—
Do attractive subdivisions dominate your housing market and give the kind of impression you want to give potential employers?	—	—
If you have one or more slum areas, do you also have an active cleanup or improvement program?	—	—
If you do not have such a program, can you get one under way in the near future so that you can tell prospects such a program is planned?	—	—
Overall, how would you rate your area's housing?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Below average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
What specific steps could you take to improve that rating?		
<hr/>		
IMAGE		
Does your community have a well-known image outside your immediate area?	—	—
Is that image favorable?	—	—
Or unfavorable?	—	—
If you believe it has some negative characteristics, are there ways you can change those?	—	—
How?		
How would you rate your area's image?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Below average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
What specific steps do you need to take to improve your area's image?		
<hr/>		
LABOR FORCE AND CLIMATE		
Do you have an ample supply of professional, skilled and trained labor?	—	—
If not, can you attract the types and numbers of people you need from other areas?	—	—
What percentage of your high school graduates who are not going on to college stay in your area?	—	—
Are your schools a good supply of human resources?	—	—
What is the current percentage of unemployed people in your area?	—	—
How does that compare with other areas that might attract the same types of companies you would like to attract?	—	—
How many people with various skills and experience are currently available to work in a new firm?	—	—

	YES	NO
How many underemployed do you have—people who have been displaced from higher paying, higher skilled jobs who could take new positions if they become available? _____		
How many more people not now employed—including housewives and early retirees—do you have in your area? _____		
Can you develop reliable data on the additional dozens, hundreds, or thousands of people who could make a significant addition to your workforce?	—	—
If so, how? _____		
How much retraining would some of these people need to be able to work effectively in the types of companies your marketing program seeks to attract? _____		
Do you have a recent survey of your labor supply and human resources?	—	—
Can you get your state labor department or some other state or local government agency to do a special survey to compile such information?	—	—
If not, could one of your local colleges conduct such a survey?	—	—
How do your employers rate their employees:		
Do they consider them productive?	—	—
Do they believe them to have good attitudes?	—	—
Is absenteeism low?	—	—
Is their sick leave record low?	—	—
Are their training costs high?	—	—
Do they think turnover is high?	—	—
What percentage of your employees are unionized?	—	—
Are strikes frequent?	—	—
How militant are your unions? <input type="checkbox"/> very <input type="checkbox"/> moderately <input type="checkbox"/> minimally	—	—
What is their strike record? average days on strike _____		
- any record of violence?	—	—
How does your labor force compare to that of your competitors?		
<input type="checkbox"/> much better <input type="checkbox"/> a little better <input type="checkbox"/> about the same <input type="checkbox"/> a little worse <input type="checkbox"/> much worse		
How do you rate your labor supply?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Below average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
What steps could you take to raise that rating?		

MAJOR EMPLOYERS:		
SUPPORT FOR EXISTING COMPANIES		
Do your companies have problems you can help solve?	—	—
Are any of them in serious trouble?	—	—
Do any need capital?	—	—
Do any need to find ways to cut costs?	—	—
Do you have a local group or project to support the companies that now provide vital jobs?	—	—

	YES	NO
Do you have an active and effective team that can help them deal with:		
- cash flow?	—	—
- marketing?	—	—
- financial needs?	—	—
- plant layout?	—	—
- recruitment?	—	—
- training?	—	—
Does your labor supply meet their needs?	—	—
Do local schools provide satisfactory technical training programs?	—	—
Are college level (including graduate) programs available to train and advance their people?	—	—
Has the cost of solid waste removal become a major problem for them?	—	—
Can you help them work out a solution?	—	—
Do they feel they get the support they want from local government?	—	—
Do you believe they pay more than their fair share of taxes?	—	—
Do they think they pay more taxes than they should?	—	—
Can they get the raw materials or component parts they need within your region?	—	—
Would it help them if you developed a local supplier?	—	—
Do they have capacity or other problems you can help them solve?	—	—
If they need to expand, can they do it where they are?	—	—
Will they need help to find a suitable building or construction site?	—	—
Will local officials make it easy for them to expand or relocate if that becomes necessary?	—	—
Does your community support them?	—	—
Do they generally feel appreciated by local business organizations, local government, and citizens?	—	—
Do you have an annual appreciation day or some other program that shows your support for local businesses?	—	—
How well do you rate the way you support companies you now have?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Below average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
What specific actions can be taken to correct existing problems?		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
NEW COMPANY START-UP PROGRAM		
Do you have an effective program to help new companies start up?	—	—
Do companies that request help from existing organization(s) in your community get the help they need?	—	—
Can your local group give practical help—quickly—on:		
- business plans preparation?	—	—
- funding needs?	—	—
- recruiting or training people?	—	—
- layout for a new manufacturing operation?	—	—
- cash flow needs review?	—	—
- marketing and selling?	—	—
Can you provide quick emergency assistance if companies get into trouble in their early months?	—	—

	YES	NO
Do you have a systematic program to check on their progress regularly to see if they need help before they get into serious trouble, such as a financial or other crisis?	—	—
How do you rate your new company start-up support?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Below average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
What specific actions can be taken to correct existing problems?		
<hr/>		
RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL FACILITIES:		
RECREATIONAL RESOURCES		
How do your recreational facilities and programs compare with national standards?		
<input type="checkbox"/> much better <input type="checkbox"/> a little better <input type="checkbox"/> about the same <input type="checkbox"/> a little worse <input type="checkbox"/> much worse		
How do they compare to the areas with which you must compete for jobs?		
<input type="checkbox"/> much better <input type="checkbox"/> a little better <input type="checkbox"/> about the same <input type="checkbox"/> a little worse <input type="checkbox"/> much worse		
Do you have an ample supply of:		
- public parks?	—	—
- playgrounds?	—	—
- tennis courts?	—	—
- golf courses?	—	—
- swimming pools?	—	—
Do you have supervised programs for both younger children and teenagers?	—	—
Are your facilities of high quality?	—	—
Are they well-maintained?	—	—
Are they safe?	—	—
Do you have excellent and varied resources and programs for the elderly?	—	—
How does the variety of your resources compare with competitor areas?	—	—
How do you rate your recreational resources?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Below average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
What can be done to improve this rating?		
<hr/>		
CULTURAL AMENITIES		
Do your cultural facilities offer a variety of high-quality programming for different ages and income levels?		
Does your community have an adequate number of or top-quality:	—	—
- theaters?	—	—
- art galleries?	—	—
- symphony orchestra?	—	—
- museums?	—	—
How would you rate your cultural amenities?	—	—
<input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Below average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
What specific improvements would you like to see in this area?		
<hr/>		

	YES	NO
Do you offer not only entertainment but training for those interested in:		
- music?	___	___
- theater?	___	___
- dance?	___	___
- art?	___	___
<u>SOLID WASTE</u>		
How does your community rate on the following solid waste questions:		
Are present landfills adequate?	___	___
If not, have plans been made to meet landfill needs?	___	___
Are recycling programs in effect?	___	___
Are they being maximized?	___	___
Is your local government working with other local governments to find solutions to solid waste problems none of them can work out alone?	___	___
How do local companies feel about present facilities and plans?		
Have their costs escalated to a point where they might seriously consider moving to an area where those costs are much lower, and where effective plans exist to deal with future needs?	___	___
How do your local solid waste programs and plans rate?	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Below average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
What can be done to correct existing problems?		
<hr/>		
<u>TAXATION</u>		
How do your tax rates compare with competitor cities?	___	___
Can newcomers expect to pay the same property tax rates as older residents?	___	___
Or do they pay a higher rate?	___	___
Do you have considerable bonding capacity?	___	___
Are your tax rates actually quite low, and do you consequently have inadequate facilities and services?	___	___
Are your tax policies keyed to current conditions: lack of federal and state funds, need to maintain infrastructure and quality of life with local tax revenues?	___	___
Are you unable to compete for desirable payrolls because water, sewer, street, and other needs haven't been budgeted for?	___	___
Is information on local government budgets readily available to citizens' groups for evaluation and comment?	___	___
How would you rate local taxes and financial management?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Below average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
What specific actions would correct these problems?		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

YES NO

How good is your transportation system of highways and streets?

☐ Superior ☐ Excellent ☐ Average ☐ Below average ☐ Poor

Can people move readily about without long traffic delays?

— —

Do you have community-wide or county-wide systems that are not only up to date but able to handle anticipated growth?

— —

Does your local or state government have specific plans to upgrade existing roads and add new streets and highways?

— —

How does your transportation infrastructure (air, rail, road) rate?

☐ Superior ☐ Excellent ☐ Average ☐ Below average ☐ Poor

What can be done to raise this rating?

UTILITIES AND SERVICES

Are essential utilities and services already provided to your most marketable sites?

— —

If not, are they readily accessible so that a prospect would not have to wait a long time to have them installed where he or she needs them?

— —

Do your local governments have a reasonable and relatively low-cost system for providing utilities and services to your best sites?

— —

Do they have exorbitant impact fees or other costly penalties built into development (like the \$5,000 per house sewer connection fee cited earlier)?

— —

Are your utility rates competitive, especially for large power users?

— —

Are your utility companies willing and able to provide services quickly and at competitive costs?

— —

Do employers in your area have problems with power interruptions?

— —

If so, can action be taken to eliminate that problem by improving present services?

— —

Are your water and sewer systems in good condition?

— —

Do you have community-wide or county-wide systems that are not only up to date but able to handle anticipated growth?

— —

If your present facilities are near capacity, does your local government have specific plans to add new facilities or upgrade and expand the old?

— —

Can a company that wants to locate in your area tie into an existing water and sewer system without delay and get the services it needs?

— —

Can utility companies provide service quickly and efficiently?

— —

How do your utilities and services rate?

☐ Superior ☐ Excellent ☐ Average ☐ Below average ☐ Poor

What can be done to raise this rating?

INFRASTRUCTURE INVENTORY

WATER

OWNERSHIP: Who owns the system? (Local govt., district, private company, other)

SUPPLY SOURCE: What is the source(s)? (well, river, reservoir, spring) (**circle one**)

Surface:

Metered _____
Pumping Capacity _____
GPM _____
Gravity _____

Groundwater:

Metered _____
Pumping Capacity _____
GPM _____
Well logs _____

DISTRIBUTION: Distribution method (pumps, gravity flow)

Minimum distribution system line size

Hydrants _____
Pressure _____
Volume _____

NUMBER OF HOOKUPS:

Residential _____
Commercial _____
Industrial _____
Agricultural _____

WATER USE:

Average daily use (gallons)	Summer	_____	Winter	_____
Current daily use				_____
Maximum daily capacity				_____
Amount of water needed to maintain minimum pressure				_____
Amount of water needed to maintain fire flows				_____
Annual peak use				_____

FIRE PROTECTION:

Fire demand and fire hydrant size _____
Rating Bureau analysis _____
Is system adequately sized for fire flows? _____
Date last reviewed _____
Quality of water pressure (stable, low sometimes) _____
Unprotected property _____

STORAGE:

Number of storage tanks _____
What are the tanks made of? (concrete, steel, redwood, fiberglass) (**circle one**)
Age of storage tanks _____
Storage capacity _____ ground level _____ elevated _____

CONSERVATION PRACTICES:

Pumping efficiency _____
Line leakage detection _____
Meter repairs _____
Enforcement practices _____

BUDGET AND RATES:

Cost/Rate: (per 1,000 gallons)	Number of Hookups
Commercial \$ _____	_____
Industrial \$ _____	_____
Residential \$ _____	_____
Hook-up fee \$ _____	_____

Master meters and location _____

Metered system:

Non-metered flat rate charge \$ _____
Metered min./base charge \$ _____

Rates last reviewed _____
Bond indebtedness \$ _____
Annual payment \$ _____
Years remaining _____
Source _____

Total water department expenses \$ _____

Total water department revenues: \$ _____

Operation and maintenance fund \$ _____

Capital replacement reserve \$ _____

Number of employees for water system:

Laboratory/equipment _____

City engineer (staff or consulting) _____

WATER TREATMENT:

Method of water treatment (none, filtration, chemical, carbon, chlorination)
(**circle one**)

STAFFING:

Number of water employees _____ Certified _____

SYSTEM NEEDS/PROBLEMS:

Planned upgrades and expansions:

What _____

When _____

Where _____

Cost _____

Condition of system: (excellent, average, poor) (**circle one**)
Needs/Concerns: Number of water outages _____
Boil orders _____
Under compliance orders _____
DEQ/EPA recommendations for improvements _____

DATA SOURCES:

Organization Contact Person Telephone

SEWAGE

OWNERSHIP:

Does your community have a sewer system? _____
Capacity/coverage _____
Does your community have a sewage treatment plant? _____
Type _____ Capacity _____ Present Load _____
Secondary and advanced treatments _____

Total gallons treated _____

BUDGET AND RATES:

	Sanitary Sewer	Treatment Plant	Waste Dump
Industrial	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Commercial	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Residential	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

Rates last reviewed _____
Rate structure (flat fee basis, consumption fee basis) (**circle one**) _____
Total sewer department revenues _____
Total sewer department expenses _____

HOOKUPS:

Number of hookups _____
Charge for new hookup: Residential \$ _____ Commercial \$ _____

SYSTEM NEEDS/PROBLEMS:

Condition of system: (excellent, average, poor) (**circle one**)
Impact of projected population growth on facilities _____

Planned upgrades/expansion:
What area _____
When _____
Where _____
Cost _____

Capital replacement fund_____

Operation and maintenance fund_____

Does system meet environmental standards?_____

DATA SOURCES:

Organization

Contact Person

Telephone

SOLID WASTE

Landfill:

Where_____

Distance_____

Life_____

Classification:_____

UTILITIES

ELECTRICITY:

Who supplies electricity to your community?_____

Who distributes?_____

Average daily usage_____

Cost and rate:

Commercial\$_____

Industrial\$_____

Residential\$_____

Hook-up fee\$_____

Capacity_____

Peak load_____

Are three phases available?_____

Planned upgrades/expansion:

What_____

When_____

Where_____

Cost_____

NATURAL GAS AND PROPANE

Local supplier _____

Average daily usage _____

Cost/rate:

Commercial \$ _____

Industrial \$ _____

Residential \$ _____

Hook-up fee \$ _____

Capacity _____

Peak load _____

Planned upgrades/expansion:

What _____

When _____

Where _____

Cost _____

TELEPHONE

Local supplier _____

Hook-up fee \$ _____

Planned upgrades:

What _____

When _____

Where _____

Cost _____

Local switching office: (digital, solid state, mechanical) (**circle one**)

Fiber optic cable? _____

Which long distance companies have 1 +dialing access? _____

DATA SOURCES:

Organization

Contact Person

Telephone

POLICE/SHERIFF

Number of local officers _____

Percentage completing Post Level 2 training _____ Post Level 3 _____

Number of police vehicles _____

Annual budget for police services \$ _____

Are centrally connected alarm services available? _____

Crime rate for the community:

Murder _____

Rape _____

Burglary _____

Assault _____

Vandalism _____

Do any reciprocal agreements exist? _____

If yes, with whom and for what specifically? _____

DATA SOURCES:

Organization

Contact Person

Telephone

FIRE

What type of fire department? (city, volunteer, district) (**circle one**)

Number of firefighters _____

Number of volunteer firefighters _____

Number of paid firefighters _____

Number of trucks or pieces of equipment (by type) _____

Community's rating by the Idaho Survey and Rating Bureau _____

Last surveyed? _____

Operation and maintenance fund _____

Capital replacement fund _____

Is equipment available for fighting industrial fires? _____

Are automatic fire alarms available? _____

Water pressure for firefighting:

Maximum _____

Minimum _____

Do you have reciprocal agreements with neighboring areas for fighting major fires?

How is the fire code enforced? (local building department, state inspectors, etc.)

Do you have local fire inspection regulations? _____

What improvements are needed to achieve higher fire rating? _____

DATA SOURCES:

Organization

Contact Person

Telephone

PUBLIC OWNED BUILDING

Type of use_____

Current condition_____

Accessible to persons with disabilities?_____

Operation and maintenance fund_____

Capital replacement fund_____

PARKS AND RECREATION

Identify use_____

Ownership_____

Current condition_____

Accessible to persons with disabilities?_____

EDUCATION

List of community schools:

Preschool

Name_____ (public, private, parochial) (**circle one**)

Enrollment _____

Elementary

Name_____ (public, private, parochial) (**circle one**)

Enrollment _____

Junior High/Middle

Name_____ (public, private, parochial) (**circle one**)

Enrollment _____

Senior High/Technical

Name_____ (public, private, parochial) (**circle one**)

Enrollment _____

Teacher/student ratio in public schools _____
Expenditure/student in public schools _____
State average: _____ National average: _____
Public school debt per capital _____
State average: _____ National average: _____
Adequacy of present public school facilities _____

Outstanding school bonds:

<u>Year issued</u>	<u>Outstanding amount</u>	<u>Methods of repayment</u>
--------------------	---------------------------	-----------------------------

Last school bond proposal:

When _____

Result _____

Special facilities (facilities accessible to students with disabilities, swimming pool, etc.)

Adult education programs _____

Vocational courses available in the high school _____

Technical schools and universities or colleges within a two-hour drive (specify distance) _____

DATA SOURCES:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
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TRANSPORTATION

MAJOR HIGHWAY ROUTES:

What highway/interstate system accesses your community? _____

If none, what is the closest access? _____

System's major destinations _____

Load limit _____ Height limit _____

Number of passenger vehicles utilizing system over past year _____

Number of commercial vehicles utilizing system over past year _____

CITY STREETS AND BRIDGES:

Jurisdiction _____

Maintenance plan and schedule _____

Number of miles per surface classification _____

General condition of curbs, gutters, sidewalks, parking, etc. _____

Staffing _____

AIR SERVICE:

Is there scheduled air service to the community? _____ If yes, by whom?
Charter air service based in the community _____ If not, nearest service.
Frequency of service _____
Passenger and freight service available _____ If yes, destination.

BUS SERVICE:

Is there a bus service to the community? _____ If yes, by whom?
Nearest service _____ Frequency of service _____
Passenger and freight service available _____ If yes, destination.

RAIL SERVICE:

Is there a rail service to the community? _____ If yes, by whom?
Nearest service _____ Frequency of service _____
Passenger and freight service available _____ If yes, destination.

TRUCK SERVICE/DELIVERY/FREIGHT

Is there a truck service to the community? _____ If yes, by whom?
Nearest service _____ Frequency of service _____
Passenger and freight service available _____ If yes, destination.

How would you rate service?

Passenger: (excellent, average, poor) (**circle one**)

Freight: (excellent, average, poor) (**circle one**)

MISCELLANEOUS

Do you have:

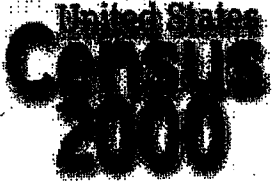
Taxi service	Yes	No	Cost	\$ _____
Public bus service	Yes	No	Cost	\$ _____
Auto rental	Yes	No	Cost	\$ _____
Overnight mail	Yes	No	Cost	\$ _____
Fed Ex	Yes	No	Cost	\$ _____
UPS	Yes	No	Cost	\$ _____
Other				

DATA SOURCES:

Organization

Contact Person

Telephone



How Census Data Have Been and Are Currently Being Used:

- Decision-making at all levels of government
- Reapportionment of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives
- Drawing federal, state and local legislative districts
- Drawing school district boundaries
- Budget planning for government at all levels
- The distribution of over \$100 billion in federal funds and even more in state funds
- Spotting trends in the economic well-being of nation
- Forecasting future transportation needs for all segments of the population
- Planning for public transportation services
- Planning for hospitals, nursing homes, clinics and the location of other health services
- Planning health and educational services for people with disabilities
- Forecasting future housing needs for all segments of the population
- Establishing fair market rents and enforcing fair lending practices
- Directing funds for services for people in poverty
- Directing services to children and adults with limited English language proficiency
- Designing public safety strategies
- Urban planning
- Rural development
- Land use planning
- Analyzing local trends
- Understanding labor supply
- Estimating the numbers of people displaced by natural disasters
- Assessing the potential for spread of communicable diseases
- Developing assistance programs for low-income families
- Analyzing military potential
- Creating maps to speed emergency services to households in need of assistance
- Making business decisions
- Delivering goods and services to local markets
- Understanding consumer needs
- Designing facilities for people with disabilities, the elderly or children
- Planning for congregations
- Product planning
- Locating factory sites and distribution centers
- Investment planning and evaluation of financial risk
- Setting community goals
- Publication of economic and statistical reports about the United States and its people
- Standard for creating both public- and private-sector surveys
- Scientific research
- Comparing progress between different geographic areas
- Developing "intelligent" maps for government and business
- Genealogical research (after 2072)
- Proof of age, relationship or residence (certificates provided by the Census Bureau)
- School projects
- Medical research
- Developing adult education programs
- Media planning and research, back up for news stories
- Historical research
- Evidence in litigation involving land use, voting rights and equal opportunity
- Determining areas eligible for housing assistance and rehabilitation loans
- Attracting new businesses to state and local areas

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Organizational Assessment Tool

This assessment tool can help guide a group discussion about how an organization, committee or board of directors is functioning. In the right hand columns check “yes” or “no” and whether you would like to see “some” improvement or “major” improvement.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Improvement</u>
<u>Mission, Purpose and Goals</u>			
1. Is there a clearly written mission statement?	_____	_____	_____
2. Are the goals of the organization written, agreed upon and clear to all?	_____	_____	_____
3. Are they achievable?	_____	_____	_____
4. Does the membership as a whole agree about what the organization should accomplish over the next three years?	_____	_____	_____
5. Is there a process for reviewing the goal-setting process?	_____	_____	_____
<u>Organizational Structure</u>			
6. Does the organization’s structure facilitate cooperation and division of labor?	_____	_____	_____
7. Do committees have clear goals and objectives and do the committees function?	_____	_____	_____
8. Are the roles and responsibilities among committees clear?	_____	_____	_____
9. Do the organization’s bylaws reflect current operations?	_____	_____	_____
10. Is there a mechanism for future development, short and long range planning?	_____	_____	_____
<u>Membership</u>			
11. Does the organization currently have the people who are necessary to carry out its purposes and achieve agreed upon goals?	_____	_____	_____
12. Are there sufficient skills, diverse community interests and perspectives among members?	_____	_____	_____
13. Is there a system for recruiting members?	_____	_____	_____
14. Are membership dropouts a problem?	_____	_____	_____
<u>Group Relations</u>			
15. Are the people or personalities getting along with one another?	_____	_____	_____
16. Are there members who have conflict of interest?	_____	_____	_____
17. Are there people in the group who can help the group examine and improve its process?	_____	_____	_____
18. Are the members’ talents being fully utilized?	_____	_____	_____

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Improvement</u>
<u>Leadership Effectiveness</u>			
19. Does the leadership provide opportunity for:			
a) expression of different points of view?	_____	_____	_____
b) personality differences?	_____	_____	_____
c) group decision making?	_____	_____	_____
d) implementation of agreed upon action plans?	_____	_____	_____
20. Does the leadership effectively deal with power struggles, hidden agendas and other needs of individuals within the group?	_____	_____	_____
21. Are there concerns about the strengths and/or weaknesses of the organization's leaders?	_____	_____	_____
22. Does the organization provide leadership development opportunities for existing as well as emerging leaders?	_____	_____	_____
23. Does the term of office provide adequate leadership?	_____	_____	_____
<u>Commitment and Follow-Through on Action Plans</u>			
24. Do members have a commitment to the organization as well as to its goals?	_____	_____	_____
25. Are tasks, assignments and areas of responsibility clearly understood?	_____	_____	_____
26. Are the decisions normally made by (check one)			
a) the membership?	_____	_____	_____
b) the leaders?	_____	_____	_____
c) combination of the two?	_____	_____	_____
27. Is there a way to monitor progress on group commitments and is there follow-through on action plans?	_____	_____	_____
28. Do things happen, are there measurable results?	_____	_____	_____
29. Are the individual member's contributions recognized?	_____	_____	_____
<u>Resources – Fiscal and Human</u>			
30. Does the organization have sufficient resources to achieve its goals?	_____	_____	_____
31. Is it using resources effectively?	_____	_____	_____
32. Is the organization driven primarily			
a) by its budget?	_____	_____	_____
b) by its goals?	_____	_____	_____
<u>Organization Evaluation</u>			
33. Does the organization periodically assess its			
a) mission, purposes and goals?	_____	_____	_____
b) membership participation?	_____	_____	_____

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Improvement</u>
<u>Organization Evaluation (cont'd)</u>			
c) quality of group interactions?	___	___	_____
d) follow-through on group commitments?	___	___	_____
e) organizational structure's adequacy?	___	___	_____
f) provisions for leadership development?	___	___	_____
<u>Additional Comments</u>			